

Galatians, Chapter Six, Lesson Two

SPIRITUAL REAPING Galatians 6:6-10

STIMULATE

** What a joy it is to have our life be directed by the Holy Spirit! Living under His control produces His fruit in our life and makes us available for serving the Lord each day. What was the ministry opportunity that we learned about during our last study?

"Spiritual Restoration" - When we find a brother or sister in Christ that has given in to a "trespass" and become entangled or caught by it, we have the privilege of restoring them to the Lord through the instruction of His word.

** When we have an opportunity to "restore such a one", what was to be the manner in which we do that?

"...in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted." Remember that humility is the call of the day! We do not compare ourselves to the sinning brother and then pronounce ourselves to be good by virtue of that comparison.

MOTIVATE

** Paul desperately wants us to live our life under the control of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16 & 25). We have seen that if we do that we will have a positive impact on others, but what will be the impact upon our own life? Do our thoughts and actions have any relationship to the outcome of our life? For the alarming answer, please join me once again in Paul's letter to the Galatians. This time in chapter six, verses 6-10 where we are going to learn the benefit of "Spiritual Reaping".

Read passage (V. 6-8) (V.9-10)

Opening Prayer

Spiritual Reaping

INVESTIGATE

V. 6 ** As we open our study for today, would someone like to set the general context of this passage? First, the letter to the Galatians as a whole and then where Paul is at by this point in his letter.

Paul was writing to the churches throughout the region of Galatia to correct Judaizers' message of salvation by works, and now has just finished encouraging the "spiritual" Christians to restore in a spirit of gentleness, any brother who has been caught up in a trespass.

** With that reminder, look again at verse six. Is Paul opening a new thought here or adding to an old one? How does this verse fit the context of the passage?

One thought might be that this verse could be saying that the one taught should share "all good things" with his teacher (which would include material things). Does Scripture teach that? Yes!

All see - 1Corinthians 9:7-14, this could fit what Paul is saying in Galatians 6:6, but a better understanding comes from a more literal translation of the verse...look back at it with me.

"Let him who receives instruction share with him who gives instruction in all good things". This rendition of the verse shows the spiritual Christian willing to share with the restored brother all good things, both spiritual and material.

The key to understanding Paul's statement comes from the word "share" [koinoneo], lit. "sharing equally". This is the verb form of the word for "fellowship" [koinonia], which is talking about mutuality, not of one party serving or providing for the other but of both parties sharing together.

** So, how does that fit the context of this passage?

The spiritual Christian (who's life is under the control of the Holy Spirit) gently confronts and restores his fallen brother, bears his burdens and willingly shares "all good things" with him.

V. 7 ** Because humility, koinoneo and submission to the Holy Spirit are all so important, what warning does Paul give to the Galatians and to us as well?

"Do not be deceived..."

** Who is doing the deceiving in this scenario?

We are! Paul is saying that you can deceive yourself about life. cf. V.3, James 1:26, 1John 1:8

** What terrifying statement does Paul use to set up a profound truth about life?

GOD IS NOT MOCKED!! [mukterizo] lit. "to turn up the nose or sneer at". This is the only place in scripture that this word is used. Amazingly, some people think you can treat God with this kind of contempt! God is listening to our life, and is concerned about everything we say!

All see - Matthew 12:34-37, God will not be mocked and Jesus is saying that your words and actions will betray your heart. Out of the "good heart", comes obedience to God in both word and deed.

Back in Galatians 6:7...

** What is the profound truth that Paul now shares?

"...whatever a man sows, this he will also reap."

If you plant carrot seeds, you will get carrots, not apples! cf. Job 4:8 with Proverbs 22:6

** Hidden within this profound truth is a principle that provides the secret to a victorious Christian life. Do you see it?

"...whatever a man sows..." I do the sowing in my own life! If I will cautiously sow righteousness, it will produce a godly lifestyle! cf. Matthew 6:33

V. 8 ** Paul goes on to explain this marvelous truth in verse eight. How many "fields" does the Christian have, in which he can sow seeds?

There are two, either the flesh or the Spirit.

** What dreadful thing happens to the one who decides to sow to the flesh?

That willful decision always reaps a harvest of corruption!
cf. 1John 5:16, ultimately that sowing can kills us.

** What does it mean to "sow to the flesh"?

The British evangelical leader John R. W. Stott has written, "Every time we allow our mind to harbor a grudge, nurse a grievance, entertain an impure fancy, 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 selfcontrol we are sowing, sowing, sowing, to the flesh".
(The Message of Galatians [London: Inter- Varsity, 1968], p. 170).

Our life then becomes corrupted by the seeds of sin sown in the flesh. Remember, we are the sowers. It is up to us to decide where we will spend our time!

** For a refreshing change of perspective, what glorious guarantee does Paul offer to the Spirit controlled Christian?

"...but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life." Herein lies the benefit of "Spiritual Reaping"...eternal life!

** Can you think of some Biblical synonyms for sowing to the Spirit?

- 1) Walk by the Spirit, Gal.5:16
- 2) Being led by the Spirit, Gal. 5:18
- 3) Producing the fruit of the Spirit, Gal.5:22-23
- 4) Be filled with the Spirit, Eph.5:18
- 5) Walking in Christ, Col.2:6-7
- 6) Setting your mind on things above, Col.3:2-3
- 7) Abiding in the Word of God, John 8:31-32
- 8) Be a living, holy sacrifice to God, Rom.12:1-2

These all stand out as synonyms of sowing to the Spirit and should be manifest in each believer's heart every day.

V. 9 ** This is a lot to take on, as we try to do all of this and be Christians who are "sowing to the Spirit", what might happen to our enthusiasm?

We can get discouraged and weary along the way.

** Why does that happen?

Because we cannot see the harvest, and we do see our persistent failures. The Puritan saint John Brown wrote, "Many Christians are like children; they would sow and reap the same day." It is easy to grow tired of the sowing process, and desire only the harvest of our efforts. Losing heart and growing weary are terms that both refer to becoming exhausted and giving up.

All see - Hebrews 12:1-3

** If we live our life under the control of the Holy Spirit, when does Paul say we will experience our "Spiritual Reaping"?

"...in due time..." cf. 1Peter 5:6-7, Hebrews 6:10, 1Corinthians 15:58

V.10 ** How long is the "opportunity" that Paul refers to?

The word used for opportunity [kairos] lit. means "a fixed or distinct period of time". Paul is not referring to occasional opportunities that may arise in a believer's life but to the total opportunity of his present earthly existence, or to put it another way "our entire Christian lifetime".
cf. Ephesians 5:15-16, Colossians 4:5-6

**** What should be the preoccupation of our heart during our Christian lifelong opportunity?**

Doing "...good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith." The word for good [agathos] is the same word Paul used for part of the fruit of the Spirit. It means moral and spiritual excellence. "It is the internal goodness produced by the Spirit in the hearts of obedient believers, which then finds expression in external goodness spoken by his mouth and performed by his hands" [John MacArthur, Galatians Commentary, p.191].

cf. 1Peter 2:15, Titus 2:6-8

This is showing Christ's love and righteousness to the sinful and watching world around us!

**** Why would Paul say, "...and especially to" Christians?**

When we are under the control of the Holy Spirit, loving, restoring, helping and teaching fellow believers, we are sowing to the Spirit and setting an example before all men. By this action, we will make the reality of Jesus Christ known to all. cf. 1John 3:14, John 13:34-35

EXTRICATE

**** Do our thoughts and actions have any relationship to the outcome of our life?**

Absolutely yes! If someone "sows to the flesh" the outcome will be corruption in their life. On the other hand, if we (by the grace of God) sow to the Spirit, the outcome will be eternal life.

DELINEATE

**** What are the "High Points" of this passage for you? What are some of the profound truths that you have learned today?**

- 1) Share "all good things" with my brothers. V.6
- 2) Do not deceive myself. V.7
- 3) God is not mocked! V.7
- 4) You reap what you sow. V.7
- 5) Sowing to my flesh will corrupt my life! V.8
- 6) The benefit of "Spiritual Reaping" is eternal life. V.8
- 7) Do good to all men - redeem the time. V.10

EVALUATE

**** How can a Christian make his or her own walk with Jesus Christ more victorious?**

By choosing to sow to the Spirit! Remember the synonyms?

- 1) Walk by the Spirit, Gal.5:16
- 2) Being led by the Spirit, Gal. 5:18

- 3) Producing the fruit of the Spirit, Gal.5:22-23
- 4) Be filled with the Spirit, Eph.5:18
- 5) Walking in Christ, Col.2:6-7
- 6) Setting your mind on things above, Col.3:2
- 7) Abiding in the Word of God, John 8:31-32
- 8) Be a living, holy sacrifice to God, Rom.12:1-2

What kind of seeds am I sowing and where am I sowing them? Am I feeding the flesh or obeying God's Holy Spirit? All see - Romans 13:14

ACTIVATE

** As we saw earlier, the benefit of "sowing to the Spirit" is that we gain eternal life with Jesus Christ. For clarity sake, it is only Christians (who have been saved by grace through faith) who are able to sow to the Spirit. Understanding that it is all God's work in us through our salvation, we would be wise to offer this prayer; Father, help me to be faithful to sow seeds of righteousness to Your Holy Spirit, that You might harvest a crop of glory to Yourself through my salvation.

Closing Prayer