**Studies in the Book of Galatians VII: Sowing And Reaping (****Galatians 6:7-10)**

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Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves. Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else, for each one should carry their own load. Nevertheless, the one who receives instruction in the word should share all good things with their instructor. Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. (Galatians 6:7-10)

Chapter 6 of Galatians is a continuation of chapter 5 of the same book. How does one exhibit and grow the fruit of the Spirit? What does it mean to walk by the Spirit? The household of faith is the context within which one walks by the Spirit. Paul expects the fruit of the Spirit to first be exhibited within the community of faith, even the one who has been caught in sin. He does not mean that the one who is spiritual is more superior. Paul also warns against spiritual pride, that one is not immune to falling into sin, while restoring our brother who has fallen into sin, with gentleness.

**BIG IDEA**

**Sow to the Spirit, in doing good to others**

# You reap what you sow! (Galatians 6:7, 8)

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. (Galatians 6:7)

Don’t be misled: No one makes a fool of God. What a person plants, he will harvest. (Galatians 6:7) (MSG)

Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. (Galatians 6:8)

Paul warns that one should not sow in one direction and expect to reap in another. We cannot trick God.

**Note to self: You cannot trick God.**

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. (Hebrews 4:12, 13)

The Word of God exposes everything in us. A man reaps what he sows. This verse is a challenge to us, as to which field we want to sow to.

**Sow to the flesh**

Galatians 5:13b “… use your freedom to indulge the flesh” (verses 5:16b, 19-21a, 26)

**Reap destruction**

Galatians 5:15 “If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.”

Galatians 5:21b “… those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

If you sow to the flesh, do not expect to reap good things out of it, because it will reap destruction.

**Sow to the Spirit**

Galatians 5:24, 25 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

**Reap eternal life**

Galatians 5:22, 23a But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

This is the evidence of sowing to the Spirit. There is no law in the world that forbids you from being gentle, self-control. We know in human society that these are all good things. We want to live in a society where kindness is then norm, goodness is the culture, faithfulness is the attribute that people show to one another. These are the attributes of the fruit of the Spirit.

Galatians 6:1 Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently.

The reaping of a community that sows to the Spirit, is a community marked by redemption. A community marked by forgiveness and rehabilitates people, one that heals and restores fallen brothers back into fellowship. This is the harvest when you sow to the Spirit. You create an environment where people feel safe to come ask for help. The crop reveals the seed.

**What is sowing?**

Sowing is what we do every day, every week. Regularly and frequently.

To sow is to take our resources – energy, time, attention, material and financial – and applying it.

*We sow a thought and reap an act;*

*We sow an act and reap a habit;*

*We sow a habit and reap a character;*

*We sow a character and reap a destiny.*

What are the thoughts that are going through your mind? What are the patterns of action that you are allowing yourself to fall into? Is there a habit that is forming? What we sow regularly becomes a habit, and it will become part of our character.

Sowing is to take our resources, energy, time, attention and any other resources, and to apply it. You apply your resources to it, that you might reap a harvest.

Sow to the Spirit so that the community and the life that you enjoy will exhibit the fruit of the Spirit, that began when you accepted Christ, the life that you were meant to live. This life cannot be gained by sowing into other things. Sow into a spiritual village where we can all grow in Christ.

What are we sowing into? What habits are we cultivating? Once you start sowing, it will start to bear fruit, and there will be a harvest.

Sowing to the Spirit may be as simple as reading the Bible regularly, learning to appreciate the people around you, gathering together on a regular basis.

# Sow to the Spirit in doing good (Galatians 6:9)

… whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. (Galatians 6:8, 9)

What does ‘good’ mean? Doing good in this context focuses primarily on giving of money and resources to alleviate the suffering and meet the needs of others, looking after the material needs of your brothers and sisters in the community.

“And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good.” (2 Thessalonians 3:13)

Doing good can also be sometimes discouraging, when do not see the hoped-for results, as we sow and yet we see no harvest.

We must continue to sow into righteousness. Keep sowing. Do not become weary. Scriptures say that in the proper time, we will reap a harvest. This teaches us to sow not only when we know the outcome. We sow in faith, trusting what God has ordained.

Augustine of Hippo was one of the greatest theologians. Growing up, he lived quite a promiscuous life. His mother prayed for Augustine from when he was 14 years until he was 31, when he accepted Christ. His mother did not give up and sowed into his life

Keep sowing, the Lord will repay you your efforts.

# Sow to the Spirit in doing good to all people (Galatians 6:10)

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. (Galatians 6:10)

All people include believers and non-believers.

In most people’s minds, we usually look out for our own. But Paul says that if we are led by the Spirit and sow to the Spirit, we will do good to all.

We also have to accept reality that we cannot help everyone all the time. We cannot help everybody all the time, but we can help someone, sometimes, somewhere, when we have the opportunity.

Paul establishes a priority – begin with the family of God. Make sure you look after each other. We must build an atmosphere where people are not afraid to say that they need help. The language of ‘brother’ and ‘sister’ is for real – do we look out for our brother and sister? We should do more than just pray. There will be times when we can do more.

Nevertheless, the one who receives instruction in the word should share all good things with their instructor. (Galatians 6:6)

How do ensure that the church of Jesus Christ walks in the ways of God? When we sow into the things of the Spirit, we must have the word of God. Sowing into the Spirit also means teaching and preaching the word of God. How else will the community be kept on track? By meeting their needs. There were teachers in Galatia who needed to teach, but was unable to as they need to find an income. They were not able to teach as much as they wanted to. In our context, it is about our tithing and giving. We need to continue to sow into the things of God.

# Conclusion

Let us be a community that is led by the Spirit, marked by gentle restoration, humble burden-bearing, generous sharing and practical goodness. Not only will we say ‘let me pray for you’, but also ‘let me help you’.



Sermon summary by May.