

Galatians 6:7 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

Galatians 6:1
Galatians 6:2
Galatians 6:3
Galatians 6:4
Galatians 6:5
Galatians 6:6
Galatians 6:7
Galatians 6:8
Galatians 6:9
Galatians 6:10
Galatians 6:11
Galatians 6:12
Galatians 6:13
Galatians 6:14
Galatians 6:15
Galatians 6:16
Galatians 6:17
Galatians 6:18

Galatians 6:7 **Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.** ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [Me planasthe.](#) (2PPPM) [theos ou mukterizetai;](#) (3SPPI) [o gar ean speire](#) (3SPA) [anthropos. touto kai therisei;](#) (3SFAI)

Amplified: Do not be deceived and deluded and misled; God will not allow Himself to be sneered at (scorned, disdained, or mocked by mere pretensions or professions, or by His precepts being set aside.) [He inevitably deludes himself who attempts to delude God.] For whatever a man sows, that and that only is what he will reap. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

ASV: Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Barclay: Don't deceive yourselves; no one can make a fool of God; whatever a man sows this he will also reap. ([Westminster John Knox Press](#))

ESV: Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. ([ESV](#))

KJV: Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

NET: Do not be deceived. God will not be made a fool. For a person will reap what he sows, ([NET Bible](#))

NIV: Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ([NIV - IBS](#))

NLT: Don't be misled-- you cannot mock the justice of God. You will always harvest what you plant. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: Don't be under any illusion: you cannot make a fool of God! A man's harvest in life will depend entirely on what he sows. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: Stop leading yourselves astray. God is not being outwitted and evaded. For whatever a man is in the habit of sowing, this also will he reap; ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

Young's Literal: Be not led astray; God is not mocked; for what a man may sow -- that also he shall reap

DO NOT BE DECEIVED, GOD IS NOT MOCKED; FOR WHATEVER A MAN SOWS, THIS HE WILL ALSO REAP: Me planasthe, (2PPPM) theos ou mukterizetai; (3SPPI) o gar ean speire (3SPAI) anthropos, touto kai therisei; (3SFAI):

- **not:** Ga 6:3 Job 15:31 Jer 37:9 Ob 1:3 Lk 21:8 1Co 3:18 6:9 15:33 Eph 5:6 2Th 2:3 Jas 1:22,26 1Jn 1:8 3:7
- **God :** Job 13:8,9 Jude 1:18
- **for:** Job 4:8 Pr 1:31 6:14,19 11:18 Ho 8:7 10:12 Lk 16:25 Ro 2:6, 7, 8, 9, 10 2Co 9:6
- [Galatians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Payday Someday!

Robert Louis Stevenson said it this way...

**“Sooner or later in life,
we all sit down
to a banquet of consequences.”**

Lloyd Ogilvie writes that...

The Interpreter's Bible refers to this section as Paul's call for Christians to engage in "the agriculture of the Spirit." That is a colorful and suggestive thought which aptly describes what Paul is talking about. The law of the harvest is relevant to our spiritual development and describes our destiny. A well-known Baptist preacher, R. G. Lee, had a famous sermon he preached hundreds of times, all over America, "Payday Someday." ([Read sermon](#)) The title alone is gripping and captures the truth. (The Preacher's Commentary)

THE CONTEXT

After speaking of walking by the Spirit (Ga 5:16-note, Ga 5:17-note, Ga 5:18-note) and describing what that looks like (Ga 5:19-note, Ga 5:20-note, Ga 5:21-note, Ga 5:22-note, Ga 5:23-note) Paul then turns to the ministry of restoration (Gal 6:1ff)...

Gal 6:1+ ("+" sign = commentary notes) Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.

2+ **Bear** (**present imperative** = command to make this your continual practice) one another's burdens (Study the "one anothers" - most positive, some negative), and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.

3+ For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

4+ But each one **must examine** (dokimazo in the present imperative = command calling for continual "testing" to prove the worth of our works in this area) his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting (kauchema - Ga 5:26 Paul warned against becoming boastful) in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another.

5+ For each one will bear his own load.

6+ The one who is taught the word (logos - Scripture in general, Gospel in particular) is to **share** (present imperative) all good things with the one who teaches him.

Comment: **Share** (koinoneo [word study]) is placed first in the Greek text for emphasis and in the **present imperative** is not a suggestion but a command to make this our continual practice. As John Calvin put it how disgraceful it would be to "*refuse an earthly recompense to those from whom we receive heavenly benefits. But it is, and always has been, the disposition of the world, freely to bestow on the ministers of Satan every luxury, and hardly to supply godly pastors with necessary food!*" ([Calvin's Commentary](#)) (Now that's a prophet, for Calvin didn't even have cable television!) Note that some like John MacArthur do not think this refers to compensation of the pastor (see his [Sermon](#))

Henry Alford labels the section beginning in Gal 6: 6 through Gal 6:10 as an

Exhortation (in pursuance of the command in Gal 6:2), to liberality towards their teachers, and to beneficence in general... From the mention of bearing one another's burdens, he naturally passes to one way, and one case, in which those burdens may be borne--viz. by relieving the necessities of their ministers and then in (Ga 6:7) regarding our good deeds done for Christ as a seed sown for eternity, he warns them not to be deceived:

in this, as in other seed-times, God's order of things cannot be set at nought: whatever we sow, that same shall we reap. God is not mocked: -- though men in their own minds mock God, this mocking has no objective existence: there is no such thing as mocking of God in reality (**Ed: Interesting thought!**) ([Galatians 6 New Testament Commentary for English Readers](#))

It is not obvious how Gal 6:7 ties in with the preceding section. Some commentators think Gal 6:7 ties directly to Gal 6:6 and paraphrase it as "*What, you hold back!* (from those who teach you the word) *Nay, do not deceive yourselves.*" (Adapted from J B Lightfoot's paraphrase). The renowned expositor **John Eadie** however feels this is too narrow and suggests the following explanation that...

probably the warning (*do not be deceived...*) has been suggested by the preceding context, and not simply or solely by the previous verse, as there is no formal connecting particle (**Ed:** Such as "*for, because, therefore, hence, etc*"). The paragraph treats of duties which spring out of love, the fruit of the Spirit (**Ed:** Which would go back to Gal 5:22, Gal 5:23), and are themselves forms of spiritual beneficence (**Ed:** that which produces good such as performing acts of kindness and charity) or well-doing,—duties, however, which one may be tempted to neglect, or regard only in a negative aspect, so far as not to be acting in direct opposition to them. One may let a fallen brother alone, but without insulting him when he is down. One may refuse to bear another's burden, but without adding to its weight (Gal 6:1). One may decline communication in temporal things with a spiritual teacher, but without inflicting on him a positive and harmful expenditure (Gal 6:6). Men may in this way deceive themselves; or in some other form selfishness and the world may so hold them in bondage, that they may be sowing to the flesh. In passing from the more ideal to the more palpable forms of Christian beneficence, the apostle throws in the awful warning of the verse before us (Gal 6:7). ([Commentary on the Greek text of the epistle of Galatians - Online](#))

Do not be deceived - Stop being led astray. Stop "wandering off the path". While this warning often implies there are false teachers (and there were in Galatia - cp Gal 3:1, 2, 3 - the readers had been "bewitched" by Judaizers who advocated the necessity of obedience to the Law, especially circumcision, in order to "successfully" live the Christ life - even as men today try to impose "rules" on others, ostensibly that they may be "free", when in fact such legalism [whether subtle or overt] only brings one into bondage to Sin and the flesh [cp "sinful passions aroused by the law" = Ro 7:5-note]!)

Eadie writes that...

The same abrupt warning is found in 1Co 6:9 as a sudden and earnest dissuasive from sinful practices which exclude from heaven; in the same epistle, 1Co 15:33, as a guard against Epicurean indulgence; and in Jas 1:16, where it is rendered, "Do not err." The warning implies a liability (**Ed:** susceptibility) to deception or error: in this case the deception appears to be, that a man may be sowing to the flesh, and yet be hoping to reap of the Spirit, or that for him might be changed the unchangeable order which God has ordained—"like seed, like harvest." ([Commentary on the Greek text of the epistle of Galatians - Online](#))

Calvin comments on the abrupt command to stop being **deceived**...

The design of this observation is to reply to the dishonest excuses which are frequently pleaded. One alleges that he has a family to support, and another asserts that he has no superfluity of wealth to spend in liberality or profusion. The consequence is, that, while such multitudes withhold their aid, the few persons who do their duty are generally unable to contribute the necessary support. These apologies Paul utterly rejects, for a reason which the world little considers, that this transaction is with God. The supply of a man's bodily wants is not the sole question, but involves the degree of our regard for Christ and his gospel. ([Calvin's Commentary](#))

C H Spurgeon...

I Find, on reference to Luther's Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, and to Calvin's Commentary on this passage, that both those learned expositors consider that this refers to the treatment of ministers by their people in the matter of their pecuniary support. They very properly point out the connection between the 6th verse and the 7th: "Let him that, is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." I suppose that there was a need for such an injunction in Paul's day, and there is a need for it now. There were some hearers of the gospel, then, who contributed generously towards the maintenance of the preacher, and the apostle says that what they gave would be like sowing good seed, in return for which God would give to them an abundant harvest; but there were others who gave sparingly, and who would therefore have a proportionately small return.

But I feel sure that the apostle had a wider range than that, and that these words express a general principle: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." So I begin my discourse by reminding you that our present lives are of the utmost possible importance for on these winged hours hang eternal issues. Our present actions are not trifles, for they will decide our everlasting destiny. Everything we do is, to some extent, a sowing of which eternity will be the reaping. (Galatians 6:7: Sowing and Reaping)

Harry Ironside comments that...

It is a remarkable fact that it is in this connection, what we might call the principle of "giving and receiving," (in Gal 6:6) that the Holy Spirit directs our attention most solemnly to the kindred law of "**sowing and reaping**."

It never pays to be forgetful of the future.

He who acts for the present moment only is like one who is indifferent to the coming harvest, and so either thinks to save by sparse sowing, or else recklessly strews obnoxious seeds in his field, sowing wild oats, as people say, and yet hopes to reap a far different kind of harvest. We reap as we sow. This is insisted on again and again in Scripture. Here we are told, "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap..."

This is so self-evident that it needs no emphasis. Yet how easily we forget it, and how readily we hope that in some strange, unnatural transformation our sinful folly will be so overruled as to produce the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

But whether it be in the case of the unsaved worldling, or the failing Christian, the inexorable law will be fulfilled—we reap what we sow. How important then that we walk carefully before God, not permitting ourselves any license which is unbecoming in one who professes to acknowledge the Lordship of Christ... Soon, at our Lord's return, we shall enter into life in all its fulness (glorified bodies, absence of sin, presence of God), and then, at the judgment-seat of Christ, we shall reap according to our sowing. They who live for God now will receive rich reward in that day. And they who yield now to the impulses of the flesh and are occupied with things that do not glorify God will suffer loss (1Cor 3:12, 13, 14, 15). (Ironside, H. A. Expository messages on the Epistle to the Galatians. 1943)

Marvin Vincent interprets **do not be deceived** as follows...

The Galatians are not to think that it is a matter of no consequence whether their fellowship be with their Christian teachers who preach the word of truth, or with the Judaizing innovators who would bring them under bondage to the law.

Do not be deceived (4105) (**planao** from **plane** which describes "a wandering" and gives us our English word "*planet*") means literally made to wander and so to go (active sense) or be led (passive sense as of sheep in Mt 18:12-13) astray.

The use of the **present imperative** with a **negative** in Greek indicates that some were being deceived thinking they could sow and not reap in kind. Note also that **planao** is in the **passive voice** which indicates an outside force, in this case the fallen flesh nature which is still present, "lurking" in believers. The fact that this is a continual command indicates that there is the ever present danger of deceiving ourselves. In fact, we are deceiving ourselves if we think that we can sin with impunity and will not reap a harvest of corruption. As an aside although believers have a "new heart" (Ezek 36:26, 27, Jn 3:3,4,5), in a sense they still possess a "deceitful heart" (Jer 17:9) because of the presence of the fallen flesh. (cp 1Pe 2:11-note)

Paul issued two similar strong warnings regarding the danger of deception to the church at Corinth...

Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? **Do not be deceived** (**present imperative** with a **negative**) neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, (1Co 6:9).

Comment: Tragically in our day, there are false teachers who twist Paul's warning, undoubtedly because they themselves are deceived (cp 2Ti 3:13-note). They teach the lie that an individual can pray a prayer to "receive Jesus" and then spend the rest of his or her life living like the devil! This is exchanging the Truth of God for the lie of the devil (Jn 8:44)! Paul is not saying that any men or women in this group cannot be saved (in fact read context 1Co 6:11), or that believers cannot be tempted by or occasionally fall into any of these sins. What Paul is saying is that if one claims to have the Spirit of Christ within (Ro 8:9-note) and continually manifest a lifestyle characterized by one or more of these sins (cp Ro 8:13-note), they will absolutely not come into God's Kingdom, but are destined to "*pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power*" (2Th 1:9). Remember that the best (really

only) antidote for deception is the Truth, specifically the Truth of God's Word, and in this context it is the Truth that "*the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God*". "Reception" of and "assimilation" of this Truth will effectively neutralize the poison of the false teaching that one's lifestyle has no bearing on one's eternal destiny. A godly lifestyle does not save you (only faith in Jesus saves - Ep 2:8, 9-note, Ro 10:9, 10-note), but it does demonstrate that your faith is genuine and therefore you are truly saved (Jas 2:14, 15, 16, 17-note, Jas 2:18, 19, 20-note, Jas 2:26-note).

Do not be deceived (present imperative with a negative): "Bad company corrupts good morals." (1Co 15:33)

Comment: If one "sows" with "corrupt" company, he himself will "reap" corruption. One deception here would be to think "I'll just bring them up to my standards of morality!" Wrong! They will inevitably bring you down. Obviously Paul is not saying we should not minister to "bad company", but just that we should not enter into their corrupt lifestyle. Jesus was holy and yet actually spent time with some of the most unholy people of the day (tax collectors, prostitutes, etc).

Henry Morris adds: This (1Co 15:33) might be paraphrased as a warning that false doctrine inevitably leads to wicked behavior. Denying a future accounting to God (implicit in denying the resurrection) leads to the philosophy of fatalistic eating, drinking and merry-making. Denying creation in favor of animalistic evolution leads to animalistic conduct, and so on.

Ryrie notes that the saying in 1Co 15:33 "is a Greek proverb, first appearing in a play by Menander."

James also used this same warning...

Do not be deceived (present imperative with a negative), my beloved brethren. (Jas 1:16)

Comment: The context is the danger of sin and the fact that God does not tempt anyone to sin, but gives good gifts. Each person is tempted by his own lusts.

MacArthur adds: Stop blaming other people, circumstances, or Satan for your temptations and sins, he is saying. Above all, do not blame God. Take full blame on yourselves, where it belongs. Realize that your enemy—your fallenness, your lusts, your weaknesses, your rationalizations, and your sins—are within and have to be dealt with from within (Ed: By application of God's Word, His Spirit, and His sufficient grace.)

Not (**ou**) - This signifies absolute negation. In other words even though men may think they are "mocking" God, they cannot do so. God absolutely cannot be fooled by spiritual pretenses.

A T Robertson explains God is not mocked this way...

Paul means to say. In particular, he means "an evasion of his laws which men think to accomplish, but, in fact, cannot" (Burton).

Mocked (3456) (**mukterizo** from **mukter** = the nose, nostril) literally means to turn up one's nose and thus pictures the idea of scorn. Hence mukterizo means to mock, deride, sneer at, ridicule, treat with contempt. The derivative **ekmukterizo** means to sneer at. Pollux quotes the word from Lysias: in medicine it is used for bleeding at the nose (Alford)

Wuest notes that mukterizo "when used rhetorically, referred to the betrayal of covert ill-will and contempt by cynical gestures in spite of fair words. It implies an outward avowal of respect neutralized by an indirect expression of contempt. The thought which Paul wishes to press home to the Galatians is that it is vain to think that one can outwit God by reaping a harvest different from that which a person has sown. The figure of sowing and reaping used for conduct and its results is a frequent one. In the Greek classics we have, "For he that is furnished the seed, is responsible for what grows." ([Wuest Word Studies - Erdman Publishing Company Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3](#) - used by permission)

Eadie comments that **mukterizo** in the context of Gal 6:7 signifies that "God is not mocked, either in reality or with impunity (Ellicott); there is no such thing as mocking God. Wieseler takes the verb in the middle, "God will not suffer Himself to be mocked"—*non sinit sibi irrideri*. The expression is a strong one, taken from that organ of the face by which we express careless contempt. Men may be imposed on by a show of virtue on the part of one who all the while scorns their weakness, but God cannot be so mocked. ([Commentary on the Greek text of the epistle of Galatians - Online](#))

TDNTA records that **mukterizo** (myterizo)

literally means "to suffer from nose-bleeding," takes on the sense "to turn up one's nose." It is thus a common term for scorn in the Septuagint (LXX), e.g., scorn of enemies in 2Ki 19:21, of the slothful in Pr 12:8, of pagan gods in 1Ki 18:27. It is a sin when directed against God's messengers (2Chr. 36:16) or chastisements (Pr

1:30) or against parents (Pr 15:5). The only NT instance is in Gal 6:7, where it is a term for **the mocking of God by a life that will not accept the lordship of the Spirit** (cf. Gal 5:25). **The reference is not to verbal scoffing but to despising God by a whole way of life.** ([Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Eerdmans](#) or [Wordsearch](#))

Gal 6:7 is the only **NT** use of **mukterizo** but there are 14 occurrences in the non-apocryphal **Septuagint (LXX)** -- 1Kgs 18:27; 2Kgs 19:21; 2Chr 36:16; Ps 79:7; Pr 1:30 (spurned); Pr 11:12; 12:8; 15:5, 20; 23:9 (despise); Job 22:19; Is 37:22; Je 20:7; Ezek 8:17.

Proverbs 1:30 "They would not accept my counsel, They **spurned** (Hebrew = naats = treat with contempt, revile, scorn, reject; Lxx = mukterizo) all my reproof.

1Kings 18:27 It came about at noon, that Elijah **mocked** them and said, "Call out with a loud voice, for he is a god; either he is occupied or gone aside, or is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and needs to be awakened."

2Kings 19:21 (Isaiah speaking to King Hezekiah after the latter had prayed to God) "This is the word that the LORD has spoken against him (Sennacherib who had threatened Hezekiah, eg 2Ki 18:34): 'She has despised you and **mocked** you, The virgin daughter of Zion; She has shaken her head behind you, The daughter of Jerusalem! (parallel passage = Isa 37:22)

2Chronicles 36:16 but they (Judah and Jerusalem) continually **mocked** the messengers of God, despised His words and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, until there was no remedy (Judah's intractable rebellion and rejection of Jehovah reaped Babylonian captivity).

Jeremiah 20:7 (Jeremiah speaking, downcast because no one listens to his prophetic warnings) O LORD, You have deceived me and I was deceived; You have overcome me and prevailed. I have become a laughingstock all day long; Everyone mocks me.

Charles Eade (1814–1884) is apparently responsible for the first version of the famous quote...

Sow an act, and you reap a habit.
Sow a habit, and you reap a character.
Sow a character, and you reap a destiny.

Here is the "amplified" version by **Samuel Smiles**...

Sow a thought, and you reap an act;
Sow an act, and you reap a habit;
Sow a habit, and you reap a character;
Sow a character, and you reap a destiny.

IT ALL BEGINS WITH A THOUGHT!

I think Samuel Smiles' addition ("Sow a thought, and you reap an act") is vitally important to consider, for indeed the law of sowing and reaping (whether the harvest is good or bad) is set in motion by our **thought life!** Little wonder that in Philippians 4:8-note Paul commands (present imperative) the believers at Philippi to **continually pursue "righteous reckoning"** ("dwell on" = logizomai [word study])! **How is your thought life? What do you think about? Are you in the Word of truth daily so that God's truth might be in you, renewing your mind (2Co 4:16, Ep 4:23-note, Col 3:10-note), setting you free (Jn 8:31, 32, 36), washing you clean from the polluting thoughts and images of our morally decaying society, transforming your mind into conformity with the mind of Christ (1Co 2:16, Ro 12:2-note)?** If not, do not be surprised when thoughts come into your mind (cp Ep 6:16-note) that reap an evil act and may even "bloom" into an evil habit! Set a guard continually at the doorway of your heart (Pr 4:23-note). May our daily "obsession" be for the Savior's disposition, His thoughts and His outlook, as we cry out, even in desperation,...

Lord of every thought and action,
Lord to send and Lord to stay;
Lord in speaking, writing, giving,
Lord in all things to obey;
Lord of all there is of me,
Now and evermore to be. Amen
--E. H Swinstead

Or consider prayerfully singing **Kate Wilkinson's** beautifully poignant old hymn [May the Mind of Christ, My Savior \(play\)](#)...

**May the mind of Christ, my Savior,
Live in me from day to day,
By His love and power controlling
All I do and say.**

May the Word of God dwell richly (Col3:16-n)
In my heart from hour to hour,
So that all may see I triumph
Only through His power.

May the peace of God my Father
Rule my life in everything, (Col3:15-n)
That I may be calm to comfort
Sick and sorrowing.

May the love of Jesus fill me (Ep5:18-n)
As the waters fill the sea;
Him exalting, self abasing, (Jn3:30-n)
This is victory.

May I run the race before me, (2Ti4:7-n)
Strong and brave to face the foe,
Looking only unto Jesus (He12:2-n)
As I onward go.

May His beauty rest upon me,
As I seek the lost to win,
And may they forget the channel,
Seeing only Him.

For (**gar** = Term of explanation) is "confirmative" (Eadie)

Whatever (whatsoever - KJV) - This is one of God's "promises" that we may or may not like, depending on how we are walking with the Lord. God's law of reaping and sowing is universal and applies to all men, at all times and in all places without impartiality and without exception. Believers are just as subject to this law as unbelievers. There are no exclusions. If you sow little lies, you will reap big lies and all the trouble that accompanies those lies! When you sow evil, you reap evil. Don't fall for the lie that "it's just a little sin" or "it's only a small compromise of my integrity"! What you do today will inevitably impact what you are tomorrow! Do not be deceived, for God is not mocked.

Tony Evans observes that...

It's amazing how many people want to plant unrighteousness, but expect God's blessing. They want to plant bad, but they want to harvest good. They want to sow seeds of wrong, but gather a harvest of right. But that's not how God's system works. There's something you need to know about sowing. Once you sow whatever you sow, it will grow naturally. The consequences of your sowing are set. You don't have to do anything extraordinary for growth to occur. What you have sown will push up through the ground someday. It's built into the process. I hope you see the seriousness of this in relation to something as vital as our love for Christ. (Returning to your first love: Putting God back in first place. Chicago: Moody Press_

J R Miller ([The Seeds We Are Scattering](#)) has a sobering thought worth seriously pondering...

We are not done with life—when we die! We shall meet our acts and words and influences again. "Do not be deceived! God is not mocked. For whatever a man sows—he will also reap!" Galatians 6:7. He shall reap the same that he sows—and he himself shall be the reaper! We go on carelessly, never dreaming that we shall see our seeds again, or have anything more to do with them. Then some day we come upon an ugly plant growing somewhere; and when we ask, "What is this vile plant?" The answer comes, "I am one of your plants. You dropped the seed which grew into me!" We must beware what we do. We shall have to eat the fruit—that grows from our sowing and planting!

There are many phases of this truth. Jesus said, "With what measure you mete—it shall be measured to you again." A man who is cruel—reaps cruelty. A man who is merciful—finds mercy. David unsheathed the sword in wrong against a subject—and the sword departed not from his house forever. He dishonored the happy home of another—and his own home was dishonored. Paul was a persecutor—and persecution followed him until it smote him to death.

The seed that we sow in others, sooner or later comes back again to our own bosom. What we sow—that we reap!

We cannot sin against others, hurting them only—and receiving no hurt to ourselves. We are not merely sowers of seed in other lives; but while we are scattering the seed in the field of our neighbor, we are sowing also in our own field. There are two harvests. He who corrupts another life—makes his own life more corrupt than before. The tempter may cause the fall and ruin of another soul—but the evil in himself has become more evil in his doing so.

**Every good thing we do, strengthens the good that is in us;
and every wrong thing makes the wrong in us more dominant.**

John Angell James writing on Galatians 6:7 comments...

How clear and how impressive are such statements, that our life is a seed-time for eternity; that all our conduct is the seed sown, and that the harvest will be according to the seed we sow—in kind, quality, and quantity. (John Angell James - excerpt from his interesting sermon - [Different Degrees of Glory](#))

Man (anthropos) is used in a generic sense to refer to both men and women.

SUPERNATURAL CAUSE and EFFECT

Actions have consequences. To illustrate God's inviolable moral and ethical laws Paul draws from the well-known law of horticulture that the planting of a specific seed will reproduce its own kind and only its own kind. If we plant wheat, we will harvest wheat, not potatoes! It follows that one determines the nature of his or her spiritual harvest by the quality (and quantity) of the seed sown. Our present life is the "seed time" presaging our eternal harvest, the quality of which depends on present sowing.

Evil actions often contain the "seeds" of own punishment and destruction within them, even as a seed contains the elements that subsequently bring forth the fruit.

In light of the truth of the consequences related to our sowing, **Pastor Tony Evans** gives us some excellent advice...

WHEN it comes to living your life, think agriculturally, not industrially. When it comes to living your life, think like a farmer, not like a technocrat. When it comes to your life, think gardens, not microwaves. (Evans, T. Tony Evans' book of illustrations: Stories, quotes, and anecdotes from more than 30 years of preaching and public speaking. Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers)

Rob Salvato says the **law of reaping and sowing** is immutable irregardless of whether we believe it or not. He goes on to say that "Its like the guy who denied the law of gravity - just didn't believe it applied to him and so he decided to prove it. He climbed to the top of a twenty-story building and dove off. His last words were heard as he sailed past a guy on the third floor, "Hey, nothing's happened yet!" Paul says God is not mocked!" ([Sermon](#))

Max Anders (Holman New Testament Commentary)

reminds us that...

Each of us by our thoughts, attitudes, and actions is constantly planting for a future reaping. Time may pass before the crop ripens, but the harvest is inevitable.

Consider the harvest!

Sows (4687) (**speiro** from **spao** = draw out, pull) literally means to scatter (seed) and the opposite of reaping or gathering. In classical Greek usage **speirō** can mean "to sow" or "plant" seed, "to sow" ideas, "to scatter" or "disperse" things or people, and even "to beget" **Speiro** is used figuratively to describe the sowing of the "seed" of the Word of God, the Gospel (= "the word of the kingdom" - Mt13:19, cp Mk 4:14 15, 16, 18), "the ideas and precepts that have been implanted like seed in their hearts, ie, received in their hearts (Mk 4:18)." (Thayer). Jesus used **speiro** repeatedly in His parables (Mt 13:3, 18, 24, 31) **Friberg** summarizes the

meanings of speiro - (1) literally, of seed sow, scatter (Mt 6.26)...(2) metaphorically; (a) as telling the Word of God, spread the gospel as divine seed (Mk 4.14); (b) of the natural human body as destined for resurrection (1 Cor 15.42-44); (c) as acting in ways that will bring multiplied consequences of good or evil (Gal 6.8) (Analytical Lexicon)

Complete Biblical Library - In the New Testament **speirō** appears some 50 times, in two main categories of meaning. Half of these occur in the two parables about sowing in Matthew 13 (and parallels in Mark 4 and Luke 8). In the parables the seed of plants was sown, representing—in the interpretation—the Word as “seed.” In Matthew 6:26; 25:24,26; Luke 19:21,22; and 1 Corinthians 15:36,37 **speirō** also refers to the sowing of the seed of plants. The other uses of **speirō** are more or less metaphoric. All of them, directly or implicitly, involve correspondence between sowing and reaping. In John 4:36,37 an aphorism about sowing and reaping was applied by Jesus to the sowing and reaping of a spiritual harvest. In 1 Corinthians 9:11 Paul presented his preaching/ teaching of the Word of God as a sowing of spiritual things. In 1 Corinthians 15:42-44 he presented resurrection truth in these terms. The burial of the body is, by analogy, like the planting of seed; it must decay before it brings forth new, incorruptible life. In 2 Corinthians 9:6,10 Paul used the law of sowing and reaping as a thinly veiled analogy for liberal giving. In Galatians 6:7,8 he used that same law as an analogy for “sowing” to the Spirit (rather than the flesh) and reaping eternal reward. Sowing to/for the flesh is “practicing such things as are included among the works of the flesh,” while sowing to/ for the Spirit is “to cultivate the fruit of the Spirit” as in Galatians 5:19-23 (Bruce, New International Greek Testament Commentary, Galatians, p.265). Finally, in James 3:18 those who make peace are represented as sowing that which will yield the fruit of righteousness as reward.

Speiro - 52x in 41v- Mt 6:26; 13:3f, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 31, 37, 39; 25:24, 26; Mk 4:3, 4, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 31, 32; Lk 8:5; 12:24; 19:21, 22; Jn 4:36, 37; 1Co 9:11; 15:36, 37, 42, 43, 44; 2Co 9:6, 10; Gal 6:7, 8; Jas 3:18.

Speirō appears more than 50 times in the Septuagint - Gen. 1:11; Gen. 1:12; Gen. 1:29; Gen. 26:12; Gen. 47:19; Gen. 47:23; Exod. 23:10; Exod. 23:16; Exod. 32:20; Lev. 11:37; Lev. 25:3; Lev. 25:4; Lev. 25:11; Lev. 25:20; Lev. 25:22; Lev. 26:16; Num. 16:37; Num. 20:5; Deut. 11:10; Deut. 21:4; Deut. 22:9; Deut. 29:23; Jdg. 6:3; Jdg. 9:45; Job 4:8; Job 31:8; Ps. 107:37; Ps. 126:5; Prov. 11:21; Prov. 11:24; Prov. 22:8; Eccl. 11:4; Eccl. 11:6; Isa. 5:10; Isa. 17:11; Isa. 19:7; Isa. 28:25; Isa. 32:20; Isa. 37:30; Isa. 40:24; Isa. 55:10; Jer. 4:3; Jer. 12:13; Jer. 30:17; Jer. 31:27; Jer. 35:7; Ezek. 36:9; Hos. 2:23; Hos. 8:7; Hos. 10:12; Mic. 6:15; Nah. 1:14; Hag. 1:6; Zech. 10:9 Most uses are for sowing the seed of plants,(Genesis 47:23; Exodus 23:10; etc). It is also used metaphorically, as to “sow” righteousness in Pr 11:21 In Prs 11:24 where generous persons are (literally) “they who sow (or disperse) their own things”. In Hosea 2:23 Israel was “sown” in Canaan; in Zech 10:9 Israel was “sown/scattered” among the nations.

Matthew 6:26 "Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?"

Matthew 13:3 And He spoke many things to them in parables (a long analogy, often cast in the form of a story, common form of teaching in Judaism = 45x in the Septuagint -LXX), saying, "Behold, the sower went out to **sow**; 4 and as he **sowed**, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up.

Matthew 13:18 "Hear then the parable of the **sower**. 19 "When anyone hears the word (logos) of the kingdom (~the Gospel) and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away (harpazo = the very verb used for the "rapture" in 1Th 4:17-see note) what has been **sown** in his heart (kardia). This is the one on whom seed was **sown** beside the road. 20 "The one on whom seed was **sown** on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy (Mt 13:21 where "falls away" = skandalizo ~ "scandalized" - see skandalon)... Mt 13:22 And the one on whom seed was **sown** among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry (merimna) of the world and the deceitfulness (apate) of wealth choke (strangle or suffocate completely - present tense = continually) the word, and it becomes unfruitful (akarpous). 23 And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit (karpophoreo) and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty."

Matthew 13:24 Jesus presented another parable to them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who **sowed** good seed in his field... (Mt 13:25, 26) Mt 13:27 "The slaves of the landowner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not **sow** good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?'... (Mt 13:28, 29, 30)

Matthew 13:31 He presented another parable to them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and **sowed** in his field. (Mt 13:32)

Matthew 13:37 And He said, "The one who **sows** the good seed is the Son of Man... (Mt 13:38) Mt 13:39 and the enemy who

sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels.

Matthew 25:24 "And the one also who had received the one talent came up and said, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not **sow** and gathering where you scattered no seed. 26 But his master answered and said to him, 'You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not **sow** and gather where I scattered no seed.

Mark 4:3 "Listen to this! Behold, the sower went out to **sow**; 4 as he was **sowing**, some seed fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate it up... Mk 4:14 "The sower **sows** the word. 15 "These are the ones who are beside the road where the word is **sown**; and when they hear, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word which has been **sown** in them. 16 In a similar way these are the ones on whom **seed** was sown on the rocky places, who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy... (Mk 4:17) Mk 4:18 And others are the ones on whom seed was **sown** among the thorns; these are the ones who have heard the word... (Mk 4:19) Mk 4:20 And those are the ones on whom seed was **sown** on the good soil; and they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold."

Mark 4:31 "It is like a mustard seed, which, when **sown** upon the soil, though it is smaller than all the seeds that are upon the soil, 32 yet when it is sown, it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and forms large branches; so that THE BIRDS OF THE AIR can NEST UNDER ITS SHADE."

Luke 8:5 "The sower went out to **sow** his seed; and as he sowed, some fell beside the road, and it was trampled under foot and the birds of the air ate it up.

Luke 12:24 "Consider the ravens, for they neither **sow** nor reap; they have no storeroom nor barn, and yet God feeds them; how much more valuable you are than the birds!

Luke 19:21 for I was afraid of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down and reap what you did not **sow**.' 22 "He said to him, 'By your own words I will judge you, you worthless slave. Did you know that I am an exacting man, taking up what I did not lay down and reaping what I did not **sow**?

John 4:36 "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. 37 "For in this case the saying is true, 'One **sows** and another reaps.'

1 Corinthians 9:11 If we **sowed** spiritual things in you, is it too much if we reap material things from you?

1 Corinthians 15:36 You fool! That which you **sow** does not come to life unless it dies; 37 and that which you **sow**, you do not sow the body which is to be, but a bare grain, perhaps of wheat or of something else... (1Co 15:38, 39, 40, 41) 1Co 15:42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; 43 it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; 44 it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

2 Corinthians 9:6 Now this I say, he who **sows** sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully... (2Co 9:7, 8, 9) 2Co 9:10 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;

John Angell James: A sparing liberality shall be attended with a sparing reward, and a bounteous liberality shall be attended with a bounteous reward. Look! as the harvest answers the measure of seed that is sown—just so, that he who sows but little reaps but little, and he who sows much reaps much—just so, saints' reaping at last will be answerable to their sowing here. All men's charities shall at last be rewarded proportionable to the several degrees of it. He who gives a pound shall have a greater reward than he who gives a penny (Ed: I would add the caveat that a better measure is the proportion of one's total wealth that is given - e.g. see the "widow's mite" Lk 21:1, 2, 3, 4). He who sows thousands shall reap more than he who sows hundreds. He shall have the most plentiful crop in heaven, who has sowed most seed here on earth, etc. They shall have interest upon interest in heaven, who sow much on this side heaven. ([The Crown and Glory of Christianity](#))

Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man **sows**, this he will also reap. 8 For the one who **sows** to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who **sows** to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

James 3:18 And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is **sown** in peace by those who make peace.

Sowing, usually accomplished by broadcasting seed, could precede or follow plowing. Fields or individual plants were fertilized with dung (Je 9:22; Lk 13:8), and the rain and sun brought different crops to maturity at different times. Following the winter rains and the 'latter' rains of March-April, barley was ready to be harvested in April and May, and wheat matured three or four weeks later. Grain was pulled up by the roots or cut with flint-bladed or iron sickles (Dt 16:9).

Every farmer exercises simple faith in the law of the harvest for without faith he would not even sow seed. The farmer knows if he sows in the spring, he will harvest in the summer. He also knows that if he sows sparingly, he will reap sparingly. On the other hand, if he sows abundantly, he knows he will reap abundantly.

This (touto) **he will also reap** - Vincent points out that "**this**" (touto) is emphatic which conveys the sense "**this and nothing else**"! (cp Mt 7:16-note) "That very thing, not something different." (A T Robertson)

Eadie...

Let him sow what he likes, *touto* with emphasis—that and that only, that and nothing else, shall he also reap. ([Commentary on the Greek text of the epistle of Galatians - Online](#))

Reap (2325) (**therizo** from **théros** = summer, harvest time ~ time of harvests) conveys the picture of cutting ripe grain and gathering the bundles together. To reap, to harvest, harvest, reaping.

**The tissues of the life to be
We weave with colors all our own;
And in the field of Destiny
We reap as we have sown.
-W H Griffith-Thomas**

The immutable law of sowing and reaping dictates that we can be assured that we will reap what we sow, but we can never know exactly how much we reap until the time of the harvest.

Will reap is the future tense regarding which **Eadie** writes...

The future refers to the judgment, when the results of present action shall be felt in their indissoluble relations. The reaping is not only the effect of the sowing, but is necessarily of the same nature with it. He that sows cockles, cockles shall he also reap; he that soweth wheat, wheat also shall he reap. It is the law of God in the natural world—the harvest is but the growth of the sowing; and it illustrates the uniform sequences of the spiritual world. The nature of conduct is not changed by its development and final ripening for divine sentence; nay, its nature is by the process only opened out into full and self-displayed reality. The blade and the ear may be hardly recognised and distinguished as to species, but the full corn in the ear is the certain result and unmistakeable proof of what was sown. And the sowing leads certainly, and not as if by accident, to the reaping; the connection cannot be severed—it lies deep in man's personal identity and responsibility. ([Commentary on the Greek text of the epistle of Galatians - Online](#))

Don Robinson has an interesting series entitled "**The 7 Laws of the Harvest**". Here are the titles and links...

- [1\) We Reap Only What Has Been Sown](#)
- [2\) We Reap the Same In Kind As We Sow](#)
- [3\) We Reap in a Different Season than We Sow](#)
- [4\) We Reap More Than We Sow](#)
- [5\) We Reap In Proportion to What We Sow](#)
- [6\) We Reap the Full Harvest Of the Good Only if We Persevere](#)
- [7\) We Can't do Anything About Last Year's Harvest, But We Can About This Year's](#)

SOWING & REAPING: OLD & NEW TESTAMENT TRUTH

There are a number of verses in both the Old and New Testament which echo the truth of the immutable law of sowing and reaping...

According to what I have seen, those who plow iniquity and those who sow trouble harvest it.(Job 4:8)

Comment: Even before the farmer sows, he expends much effort in preparing the soil. So too those who **plow** evil ('aven) purposely and diligently pursue a course of wickedness. They sow **trouble** ('amal = misery, that which is an unpleasant, hard, distressing experience) as they revel in transgressing the moral law. Their **sowing** determines the kind of **harvest** they will **reap**. It is typical of Eliphaz's style that he states that he has personally seen this principle at work. (Hartley, J. E.. The Book of Job. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co)

Those who sow in tears shall reap with joyful shouting (cp Ps 30:5). He who goes to and fro weeping,

carrying his bag of seed, shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.
(Ps 126:5,6)

W A Criswell: The principle of sowing and reaping, which is applicable to the restoration of the exiles (Jews from Babylon after 70 years of captivity, also serves as an encouragement to all believers to be faithful in **personal witnessing**. All aspects of these verses are crucial to the Christian missionary and evangelistic mandate (cp Mt 28:16, 17, 18). The preciousness of the seed is an apt description of the intrinsic value of the **message of redemption**. Ps 126:5 depicts the earnestness of the enterprise, not to mention the difficulty of the task. However, the culmination of this strenuous and emotionally draining effort is rejoicing at harvest time. ([Criswell, W A. Believer's Study Bible: New King James Version. 1991. Thomas Nelson](#))

Tony Evans: THEY tell me that one kernel of wheat in the ground produces a stalk bearing three heads of wheat. In each head, there are fifteen to thirty-five kernels, altogether producing somewhat close to a hundred kernels from the stalk. When planted, these kernels will produce ten thousand kernels. When those ten thousand are replanted, they produce a million kernels. It's amazing what one person can do if they just start right where they are. (Ibid)

(Note: The following comments relate only to Ps 126:5. For Spurgeon's comments on Ps 125:6 see [Psalm 126:6 - Treasury of David](#))

Spurgeon's Comment: Hence, present distress must not be viewed as if it would last forever; it is not the end, by any means, but only a means to the end. Sorrow is our **sowing**, rejoicing shall be our **reaping** (cp 2Co 4:17, 18). If there were no **sowing** in tears there would be no **reaping** in joy. If we were never captives we could never lead our captivity captive. Our mouth had never been filled with holy laughter if it had not been first filled with the bitterness of grief. We must **sow**: we may have to **sow** in the wet weather of sorrow; but we shall **reap**, and **reap** in the bright summer season of joy.

**Let us keep to the work of this present sowing time,
and find strength in the promise
which is here so positively given us.**

Here is one of the Lord's **shalls** and **wills**; it is freely given both to workers, waiters, and weepers, and they may rest assured that it will not fail: "**in due season they shall reap.**" ([Treasury of David](#))

George Horne (1730-1792): This promise is conveyed under images borrowed from the instructive scenes of agriculture. In the sweat of his brow the husbandman tills his land, and casts the seed into the ground, where for a time it lies dead and buried. A dark and dreary winter succeeds, and all seems to be lost; but at the return of spring universal nature revives, and the once desolate fields are covered with corn which, when matured by the sun's heat, the cheerful reapers cut down, and it is brought home with triumphant shouts of joy.

**Here, O disciple of Jesus,
behold an emblem of lily
present labour and thy future reward!**

Thou "sowest", perhaps, in "tears"; thou doest thy duty amidst persecution, and affliction, sickness, pain, and sorrow; you labour in the Church, and no account is made of thy labours, no profit seems likely to arise from them. Say, thou must thyself drop into the dust of death, and all the storms of that winter must pass over thee, until thy form shall be perished, and thou shalt see corruption.

**Yet the day is coming
when thou shalt "reap in joy",
and plentiful shall be thy harvest.**

For thus thy blessed Master "went forth weeping", a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, "bearing precious seed" and sowing it around him, till at length his own body was buried, like a grain of wheat, in the furrow of the grave (cp "the joy set before Him" - He 12:2). But he arose, and is now in heaven, from whence he shall "doubtless come again with rejoicing", with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, "bringing his sheaves with him". Then shall every man receive the fruit of his works, and have praise of God. --George Horne (1730-1792), in "A Commentary on the Psalms." ([Treasury of David](#))

Thomas Fuller: I saw in seedtime a husbandman at plough in a very rainy day. Asking him the reason why he would not rather leave off than labour in such foul weather, his answer was returned me in their country rhythm: --

Sow beans in the mud,
And they'll come up like a wood.

This could not but remind me of David's expression, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy", etc. --Thomas Fuller (1608-1661), in "Good Thoughts in Worse Times." ([Treasury of David](#))

Samuel Lavington:

The Christian Husbandman

- 1) **Illustrate the metaphor.** The husbandman has a great variety of work before him; every season and every day brings its proper business. So the Christian has duties in the closet, in the family, in the church, in the world, etc., etc.
- 2) Whence it is that many Christians sow in tears.
 - a) It may be owing to the badness of the soil.
 - b) The inclemency of the season.
 - c) The malice and opposition of enemies.
 - d) Past disappointments.
- 3) What connection there is between sowing in tears and reaping in joy.
 - a) A joyful harvest, by God's blessing, is the natural consequence of a dripping seed time.
 - b) God, who cannot lie, hath promised it.
- 4) When this joyful harvest may be expected. It must not be expected in our wintry world, for there is not sun enough to ripen it. Heaven is the Christian's summer. When you come to reap the fruits of your present trials, you will bless God, who made you sow in tears. Improvement.
 - a) How greatly are they to blame who in this busy time stand all the day idle!
 - b) How greatly have Christians the advantage of the rest of the world!
 - c) Let the hope and prospect of this joyful harvest support us under all the glooms and distresses of this vale of tears.

Outline of a Sermon by Samuel Lavington, 1726- 1807. ([Treasury of David](#))

G. R. Comments: Two pictures. The connecting "shall" (Ps 126:5)

- 1) There must be sowing before reaping.
- 2) What men sow they will reap. If they sow precious seed, they will reap precious seed.
- 3) In proportion as they sow they will reap. "He that soweth sparingly", etc.
- 4) The sowing may be with sorrow, but the reaping will be with joy.
- 5) In proportion to the sorrow of sowing will be the joy of reaping. --G. R. ([Treasury of David](#))

The wicked earns deceptive wages (gain of the wicked is not "real", for it is not enduring Pr 10:25), **but he who sows righteousness** (= lives righteously, "right" by God's standards) **gets ("reaps") a true reward.** (Pr 11:18).

Expositor's Bible Commentary: Ultimately, rewards are appropriate for different character traits. The line extols the benefits for one "who sows righteousness," i.e., one who inspires righteousness in others while practicing it himself. What is sown will yield fruit (1Cor 9:11; 2Cor 9:6; Jas 3:18). ([Gaebelein, F. Editor: Expositor's Bible Commentary OT 7 Volume Set: Books: Zondervan Publishing](#))

The Pulpit Commentary: The "reward," (~harvest, reaping) in a Jew's eyes, would be a long life in which to enjoy the fruits of his good conduct. We Christians have a better hope, which is, perhaps, adumbrated by this analogy; as the seed sown in the field does not produce its fruit till the time of harvest, so righteousness meets with its full recompense only in the great harvest at the end of all things. ([Pulpit Commentary - Exposition](#))

The Pulpit Commentary: The principle of recompense.

- I. Every action is a secondary cause, and is followed by its corresponding effect.
- II. The effect corresponds in kind and in degree to the cause.
- III. Human conduct may thus be viewed as a sowing followed by reaping, work by wages, action by reaction.
- IV. The gain of the wicked is deception illusory.

Illustrations: Pharaoh's attempt to decrease Israel resulted in their increase and his own destruction. Caiaphas seeking by murderous expediency to save the nation brought about its ruin. The persecution of the Church at Jerusalem led to the greater diffusion of the gospel (Acts 8.).

- V. The reward of the righteous is stable and sure.

Illustrations: The patient continuance in well-doing of Noah, Abraham, Joseph. Compare the sowing of St. Paul in tears, e.g. at Philippi (Acts 16.), with his joyous reaping, as his Epistle to the Philippians witnesses. The reward is eternal—"a crown of righteousness that fadeth not away." (cp 1Co 9:25, 2Ti 4:8-note, Jas 1:12-note, 1Pe 5:4-note, Rev 2:10-note) "What we weave in time we shall wear in eternity."—J. ([Pulpit Commentary - Homilies](#))

Critical and Exegetical Commentary: Goodness, says the proverb, is commercially profitable—the pay is prosperity, insured by the laws of man and the favor of God. ([A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Proverbs](#))

There is one who scatters, and yet increases all the more, And there is one who withholds what is justly due, and yet it results only in want. The generous man will be prosperous, and he who waters will himself be watered. (Pr 11:24, 25)

He who sows iniquity will reap vanity, and the rod of his fury will perish.(Pr 22:8).

Pulpit Commentary: They who do evil shall meet with punishment in their very sins—the exact contrast to the promise to the righteous (see Pr 11:18).

NET Bible Note: The verse is making an implied comparison (a figure of speech known as *hypocatastasis*) between **sowing** and **sinning**. One who sins is like one who sows, for there will be a "harvest" or a return on the sin – **trouble**... (Commenting on the last half of the verse) The expression signifies that in reaping trouble for his sins this person will no longer be able to unleash his fury on others. ([NET Bible Proverbs 228](#))

H A Ironside: They who in their youth sow wild oats will have a terrible crop to reap in older days (Pr 22:8). No wonder the world has so many disillusioned and disappointed old men and aged women. They frittered away the golden hours of youth in careless living and selfish indulgence, and as a result their wrecked constitutions, and in some cases impaired minds, make their later years most distressing and unhappy. It is quite otherwise with men and women who, in the days of their youth, lived in an orderly manner walking before God in self-control, refusing to become the slaves of sensuality. For them gray hair is indeed a crown of glory, because they are found in the way of righteousness (Pr 16:31). Someone has well said, "**The Devil has no happy old men.**" But how different it is with those who have known and loved the Lord through the long years! When they reach the eventide of life, theirs is a peace and a serenity which is found only in the service of God. Of them it can be said, "At eventide it shall be light."

Sowing the seed of a ling'ring pain,
Sowing the seed of a maddened brain,
Sowing the seed of a tarnished name,
Sowing the seed of eternal shame,
Oh, what shall the harvest be?

He who tends the fig tree will eat its fruit, and he who cares for his master will be honored.(Pr 27:18)

Comment: "The proverb for today explains this reward for service in terms of tending a fig tree. Taking care of a tree is thankless work: most of the year the caretaker mulches, prunes, waters, sprays, or trims. But when the fruit comes, its caretaker is rewarded for his labor. The same is true regarding the servant who looks out for the interests of his master. Jesus says that God will honor those who serve His Son and go where He goes, even unto death (Jn 12:26). In economics, this is called the **law of returns**. What you cast on the water after many days will return to you (Ec 11:1) ([MBI - Today in the Word](#))

For they sow the wind and they reap the whirlwind. The standing grain has no heads; It yields no grain. Should it yield, strangers would swallow it up. (Ho 8:6-7).

Comment: Note that the reaping comes later and greater! Do not be deceived! Next time you are considering some willful sin, stop and ponder Gal 6:7, 8 and Hosea 8:6! It just might be the best pause you'll ever make, because you cannot even predict the consequences. Surely if King David had been able to envision the consequences that his evil deeds would wreak on his family, he would have had pause and cause to turn his eyes away from Bathsheba!

Warren Wiersbe: In their idolatry and political alliances, the Israelites were trying to sow seeds that would produce a good harvest, but they were only sowing the wind—vanity, nothing—and would reap the whirlwind. Nothing could stop the force of the Assyrian army. The harvest would be more powerful than the seed! The sowing/reaping image continues with the picture of a blighted crop of grain. The rulers of Israel thought their worship of Baal and their foreign alliances would produce a good crop of peace and prosperity; but when the time came for the harvest, there was nothing to reap. And even where heads of grain did appear, the enemy reaped the harvest and Israel gained nothing. In the image of the wind, Hosea said, "You will reap far more than you sowed, and it will be destructive!" In the image of the grain, he said, "You will reap nothing at all, and your enemies will get the benefit of all the promises you made." (Bible Exposition Commentary - Old Testament)

Related Resource: Spurgeon's Sermon on Hosea 8:7 - ["What Shall the Harvest Be?"](#)

Leon J Wood (Expositor's Bible Commentary): The "wind" speaks of the emptiness of Israel's sin; the "whirlwind" speaks of God's impending destruction. Israel's punishment had already begun: the stalks were not producing grain that could be milled into flour. God had apparently withheld the rain. Furthermore, if any stalks did produce grain, it was only for foreigners to snatch it up.

Ryrie: Israel sowed the wind of idolatry and reaped the whirlwind of destruction.

Henry Morris: Reaping follows sowing. "He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption" (Gal 6:8). This principle was applied with great fury to ancient Israel, and a similar time of reaping awaits other nations that forget God (Ps 9:17).

Sow (command) **with a view to righteousness, reap** (command) **in accordance with kindness** (Hebrew = hesed/heced - God's lovingkindness, His covenant loyalty and mercy); **Break up** (command) **your fallow ground** (Repent. Compare Peter's similar command to his Jewish audience in Acts 3:19, 20), **for it is time to seek the Lord until He comes to rain righteousness on you** (Until = inherent in this time phrase is His promise - no one seeks Jehovah in vain, if they seek Him is sincerity. Even as literal rain refreshes and waters the seed, so too must God by His Spirit give "spiritual rain" which alone brings forth spiritual fruit). **13 You have plowed wickedness** (compare "sowing"), **you have reaped injustice. You have eaten the fruit of lies** (More of the reaping the rotten fruit of sin). **Because you have trusted in your way** (Here seems to be the root cause - Faith in man, not faith in Jehovah.), **in your numerous warriors** (Ho 10:12-13).

Comment: Hosea's exhortation and encouragement (cp similar call in Hos 6:1, 2, 3) was a mercy filled charge in the midst of condemnation and soon coming judgment on the land of Ephraim/Israel because of her idolatry. This is essentially a call for repentance to bring forth fruit (righteousness) in keeping with repentance. The plow of repentance was needed to remove the outer layer of weeds and thorns that had resulted from idolatry. Verse 12 is an offer of divine mercy in the context of impending wrath. The only way for Israel to **sow** righteous deeds is by grace through faith, a faith which believes in and depends on Jehovah. The breaking up of fallow ground is a call for preparation of one's heart to receive the Word implanted which alone is able to save one's soul. Verse 13 is a historical recounting of Israel's sowing of wickedness and a prophecy of her soon to come reaping the fruit thereof which would be "destruction" (Hos 10:14, 15, cp "corruption" in Gal 6:8)

Henry Morris: Sowing the wind is about to reap a whirlwind of judgment, in Israel, whereas sowing in righteousness would have reaped mercy. This is apparently a last call to repent and seek the Lord before final judgment

David Guzik: Israel had sown the seed of sin, and they would soon reap judgment from God. Even now, if they would sow righteousness, they would reap in mercy at the next harvest. **We all sow into our life but do we sow seeds of righteousness? What "crop" will grow up from the seeds planted today, or this past week, or this past month?**

Cast your bread on the surface of the waters, for you will find it after many days.(Ec 11:1)

Henry Morris: The metaphor is that of spreading spiritual seed far and wide, trusting eventually to find its fruit in redeemed lives. This is the same message as in Ecclesiastes 11:1. Spiritual seed, "the word of God" (Luke 8:11), should not only be sown far and wide, but also in both morning and evening. Then it is "God that giveth the increase" (1 Corinthians 3:7).

Sow your seed in the morning, and do not be idle in the evening, for you do not know whether morning or evening sowing will succeed, or whether both of them alike will be good. (Ec 11:6)

Henry Morris: Spiritual seed, "the word of God" (Lk 8:11), should not only be sown far and wide, but also in both morning and evening. Then it is "God that giveth the increase" (1Co 3:7).

And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.(Jas 3:18)

A W Tozer has an interesting discussion of the law of sowing and reaping...

Every man sows what he will later reap and reaps what he has previously sown. This is a law of life, says Paul, and we may as well know that we cannot beat it. God will not be mocked. We are all sowing our own future, and the seeds we sow are the deeds we do.

And, ironically enough, sometimes deeds we neglect to do or are afraid to do become seeds also and bring forth their harvest.

For in the total scheme of things it often happens that deeds undone have as great power for good or evil as deeds actually performed.

The unbreakable link between harvest and seed was forged by the Lord God Himself at the creation. From Him went forth the word, "**after his kind,**" and that word has linked together the seed and the harvest, the sowing and the reaping, from that day to this. Our today is bound to all our yesterdays, and our tomorrow will be the sum of our present and our past. That is the fact, and we may make of it what we will. The sovereign God has permitted us to have a measure of conditional sovereignty, a mark of the divine image once given at the Creation and partially lost by the Fall.

We may sow to the flesh if we will.

There will be no interference from above.

Thus to sow is our privilege—if we want to reap the harvest of corruption which must inevitably follow, a harvest no man in his right mind could deliberately choose.

No, the snare lies in choosing the pleasures of sowing with the secret hope that in some way we can escape the sorrows of the reaping; but never since the beginning of the world has it been possible to separate the one from the other. (Tozer, A. W. *The Next Chapter After the Last* (94). Camp Hill, PA.: WingSpread)

Illustration of Reaping - The Emperor Charlemagne wanted to have a magnificent bell cast for the church he had built. An artist named Tancho was employed by the church to make it. He was furnished, at his own request, with a great quantity of copper, and a hundred pounds of silver for the purpose. He kept the silver for his own personal use, however, and substituted in its place a quantity of highly purified tin. When the work was completed, he presented the bell to the Emperor, who had it suspended in the church tower. The people, however, were unable to ring it. So Tancho himself was called in to help. But he pulled so hard that its tongue fell down and killed him, reaping what he had sown!

P G Ryken has written that "The book of Lamentations is one long illustration of the eternal principle that "a man reaps what he sows" (Galatians 6:7b)". (Ryken, P. G. *Jeremiah and Lamentations : From Sorrow to Hope*. Preaching the Word. Page 743. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books)

Sowing the Wrong Seed - I once read a fable about a farmhand who was given instructions to plant a field of barley. He acted immediately, but he sowed oats instead of barley. After several weeks, the owner of the farm went out to inspect the crop and was astonished to see oats growing instead of barley. The workman was told to report to the owner's office at once. "I told you to plant barley," he said. "Why did you sow oats?" "Oh," the man responded, "I didn't think it would make any difference. I figured that even if I planted oats, I could expect barley to come up." Enraged, the owner shouted, "Are you crazy, man? What ever made you think that?" The farmhand replied, "I got that idea from you, sir. I've been watching the way you live. And I've noticed that even though you're constantly sowing 'seeds of evil,' you expect to be reaping 'fruits of virtue!'"

No one can avoid the natural laws of sowing and reaping. Whatever we sow, we will reap. **What are you sowing?** —R. W. De

**The cost of living goes up and down,
but the cost of sowing wild oats remains the same!**

A woman gave her teenage son a used automobile. The youth enjoyed racing the car around curves so he could hear the tires squeal. One morning his car skidded and smashed into a telephone pole. The boy was thrown through the windshield and rushed to a hospital. When his pastor reached the hospital, the boy's mother was frantic. She grasped the pastor's hands in hers and exclaimed,

"Why would God let this happen?"

Her question is understandable, but it misses the hard truth of the situation. She can't blame God for that accident. If the Lord were to suspend the laws of physics and snatch a telephone pole from in front of her son, He might just as well place one in front of someone else who was driving carefully.

God doesn't cancel the rule of sowing and reaping just because we become Christians. But there is an upside to that principle. If we sow "to the Spirit [we] will of the Spirit reap everlasting life" (Gal. 6:8). —H. W Robinson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

For our transgressions are multiplied before You, and our sins testify against us (Isaiah 59:12).

A group of young people from Renaissance High School in Detroit cut classes to attend a rock concert in Hart Plaza. They probably thought they had gotten away with their truancy, but the next day, when the Detroit News appeared on the newsstand, it carried a color photo of the concert on the front page. And who was in that picture? That's right—the delinquent students of Renaissance High, easily recognizable to anyone. According to the paper, "Eagle-eyed assistant principal Dr. Elijah Porter spotted the students and had a conversation with them." As for the kids, it went on, "There was nothing they could say."

The Bible teaches that we cannot hide our iniquities. We may be able to cover them up for a while and even get away with them for an extended period of time. But the time will inevitably come when we must face up to them, either in this world or in the next. Paul told the Galatians,

"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked;
for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" (Gal. 6:7).

Whenever we have a sin we are hiding, we must confess and forsake it. Or, when we are tempted to pursue something we know is wrong, thinking we won't get caught, we must determine to go no further. Our picture may not appear on the front page, but the Bible says we won't get away with it. —D. C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

**The seed of wrongdoing maybe sown in secret,
but the harvest cannot be concealed.**

Sowers and Reapers - The principle of sowing and reaping is often used to warn about the inevitable consequences of evil deeds. But it can also be used as an encouragement to believers in their service for Christ.

A. B. Simpson said,

"I believe the toils and prayers of 20 years ago are not lost. We may not see the results of our labor and sacrifice immediately, but in due time they will issue into beauty and glory.

"The love you give, the forgiveness you show, and the patience and forbearance that grace your life will surely produce much fruit. The friend you long to bring to Christ may refuse to be reconciled to Him. His heart may seem to be very hard, and your prayers and efforts may appear to be lost; but they are not! They will come back to you a hundredfold—perhaps long after you have forgotten them.

"Give God time! The results are working themselves out slowly but surely. There must be seedtime and summer before the autumn reaping."

This agrees with Solomon's words:

Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days (Ec 11:1).

Keep on sowing! In His own time, and in His own way, the Lord will send the harvest! -- Richard De Haan [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Keep on working through the seasons
In the sunshine and the rain;
Earnest prayer and faithful sowing
Yield a wealth of golden grain. —Anon.
God promises no loaves to loafers.

Seeds and Fruit - I read a fable about a man who was browsing in a store when he made the shocking discovery that God was behind a sales counter. So the man walked over and asked, "What are You selling?" God replied, "What does your heart desire?" The man said, "I want happiness, peace of mind, and freedom from fear ... for me and the whole world." God smiled and said, "I don't sell fruit here. Only seeds."

In Galatians 6, Paul stressed the importance of sowing seeds of God-honoring behavior, for "whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" (Gal 6:7). We can't expect to experience the fruit of God's blessings if we don't recognize the importance of doing our part.

It helps to follow the example of others who have sown good seed. Author Samuel Shoemaker said that a good example can either inspire us or cause us to say, "Oh yes, he (or she) is like that. He is not troubled by temper or nerves or impatience or worry as I am; he is just a happier temperament." Shoemaker continued, "It may not occur to us that perhaps he had to fight for his serenity, and that we might win if we would do the same."

Are you weary of the way you are? Ask God for His help and begin sowing seeds of new actions and responses today. In due season the Spirit will give the increase. -- Joanie Yoder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We're always sowing seeds in life
By everything we do and say,
So let's make sure the fruit we reap
Comes from the good we do each day.
—Hess

**The seeds we sow today
determine the kind of fruit we'll reap tomorrow.**

Count On It! - A children's book titled **'The Chance World'** describes an imaginary planet where everything happens unpredictably. For example, the sun might rise one day or it might not, and it might appear at any hour. Some days the moon might come up in its place. One day you might jump up and not come down, and the next day find gravity so strong you can't even lift your feet.

Henry Drummond, the Scottish biologist, writer, and lecturer, read 'The Chance World'. He commented that in such a place where natural law was annihilated,

reason would be impossible. It would become a lunatic world with a population of lunatics.

We should be thankful for the dependability of the natural laws the Creator has set in motion. They can be a great benefit to us if we recognize and respect them.

If we violate those laws, however,
we will suffer the consequences.

That is also true of God's spiritual laws, such as the one in today's text (Gal 6:7-8) The person who ignores God's standards and caters to sinful appetites can expect destruction. But the person who follows the leading of the Spirit will experience the blessings of everlasting life.

God's laws never fail. You will reap what you sow. Count on it!

Surer than autumn's harvests
Are harvests of thought and deed;

Like those that our hands have planted,
The yield will be like the seed.

**If we sow nothing but sin,
we can count on a harvest of judgment.**

Examples of Attempts to Mock God - Ernest Hemingway became famous for snubbing his nose at morality and at God, declaring that his own life proved a person could do anything he wanted without paying the consequences. Like many others before and after him, he considered the ideas of the Bible to be antiquated and outdated, completely useless to modern man and a hindrance to his pleasure and self-fulfillment. Moral laws were to him a religious superstition that had no relevance. In a mocking parody of the Lord's Prayer he wrote, "Our nada [Spanish for "nothing"] who art in nada." (**Ed:** Woe! He had no concept of He 10:31-note and He 12:29-note) But instead of proving the impunity of infidelity, the end of Hemingway's life proved the folly of mocking God. His debauched life led him into such complete despair and hopelessness that he put a bullet in his head.

Other famous authors, such as **Sinclair Lewis** and **Oscar Wilde**, who openly attacked the divine moral standard and thumbed their noses at God, mocking His Word and His law, were nonetheless subject to that law Lewis died a pathetic alcoholic in a third-rate clinic in Italy, and Wilde ended up an imprisoned homosexual, in shame and disgrace. Near the end of his life he wrote, "forgot somewhere along the line that what you are in secret you will some day cry aloud from the housetop." (John MacArthur)

Reaping What You Sow - Because of the natural law of seedtime and harvest, the farmer knows when and what to plant to achieve the desired result. He knows that you harvest wheat if you sow wheat, that you do not sow weeds and reap wheat. God's moral and spiritual laws work in the same way. You cannot sow sin and reap righteousness, or indulgence and reap health, or strife and reap peace. You cannot sow "the works of the flesh" and reap "the fruit of the Spirit." But there is a further truth in this law. You reap what you sow in quality, but you reap more than you sow in quantity. From one grain of corn will come hundreds of grains of corn. Applying this in the moral and spiritual realms, it is no wonder that so many lives are ruined, that the world is in such turmoil, and that uncounted millions of souls stumble on their blinded way toward hell! And all because people live contrary to this benevolent but inexorable spiritual law of God. (Hobbs, H. H. - My favorite illustrations. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press)

Dirty Hands — One of William Shakespeare's most intriguing characters is Lady Macbeth. Having heard a prophecy that her husband would become king, she convinced him to assassinate the reigning monarch. When the bloody deed was done, Macbeth was conscience-stricken. His wife rebuked his squeamishness and helped him cover up the crime. Her husband was crowned king. But that wasn't the end.

Lady Macbeth's initial resolve turned to remorse. She grew mentally unstable, and couldn't stop washing her hands. "Will these hands ne'er be clean?" she asked. Finally, the guilt drove Lady Macbeth to suicide.

Guilt is an emotion that can weigh us down whenever we cross a moral boundary. All of us are capable of feeling guilty when we violate the law of God written in our hearts (Ro 2:14, 15). If we continue to sin willfully, however, we will dull our conscience.

Lady Macbeth is a good reminder of a biblical principle:

Whatever we sow, we will certainly reap (Gal 6:7, 8).

When we feel temptation, we need to listen to our conscience—not try to silence it. It's far better to avoid committing an act we will later regret than to live with the consequences. — by Dennis Fisher ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Sometimes there's just one step to go
Before we yield to sin,
But God will help us to say no
If we trust His power within.
—Hess

Only Jesus' blood can wash away the stain of sin.

Moody Bible Institute's Today in the Word - Sowing and Reaping - Harvesting was a far more difficult task before Cyrus McCormick invented the mechanical reaper. Even laboring long hours, farmhands using sickles could harvest no more than one acre

per person per day. When McCormick redesigned his father's defective prototype and presented the world with the first mechanical reaper, he revolutionized farming worldwide. The new machines could harvest more in one hour than one worker could in a whole day. One fact remained the same, however. Whether with sickles or McCormick's invention, farmers could reap only what they had sowed. This truth, also found in the spiritual realm, is Paul's focus in today's reading...

Gal 6:8 presents a contrast between a worldly and a spiritual sower. The worldly or carnal person sows to further his sinful nature. Such actions produce an effect on his character; the hold of sin over him increases. But the spiritual person sows to cultivate the new nature. Every time he performs an action in the power of the Spirit, the power of the Spirit over him increases. His abundant harvest is a life characterized by the fruit of the Spirit...

What seeds have you been sowing? Do you walk through life looking for opportunities to "do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers" (Ga 6:10)?

For many of us, the answer is probably **"No."** We have lapses, grow selfish, forget, think of excuses, or fail to see others' needs. Ask the Lord to give you eyes to see the needs around you and the grace to do something about them. **He will show you opportunities and enable you to respond as He would.** (MBI - Today in the Word)

Outline (partial) from **David Hocking** on Galatians 6:7-10...

DEFENSE OF THE TRUE GOSPEL - Gal 1:6-2:21

DOCTRINE OF THE TRUE GOSPEL - Gal 3:1-4:31

DUTY OF THE TRUE GOSPEL - Gal 5:1-6:10

The SOWING of seeds - Gal 6:7-10

1. The Principle established - Gal 6:7
2. The Productivity that will result - Gal 6:8
3. The Promise to the faithful - Gal 6:9
4. The Practice to be cultivated - Gal 6:10

The good we do is never lost,
Each kindly act takes root,
And every bit of love we sow
In time will bear rich fruit.
—Anonymous