

Law One: We Reap Only What Has Been Sown

Law Two: We Reap the Same in Kind as We Have Sown

Law Three: We Reap in a Different Season Than We Sow

Law Four: We Reap More Than We Sow

Law Five: We Reap in Proportion to What We Sow

Law Six: We Reap the Full Harvest of the Good only if We Persevere

Law Seven: We Can't Do Anything About Last Year's Harvest

THE SEVEN LAWS OF THE HARVEST

LAW FIVE: WE REAP IN PROPORTION TO WHAT WE SOW TEXT: 2 CORINTHIANS 9:6

2 Corinthians 9:6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

Both Law Four and Law Five deal with QUANTITY.

The fourth law states that we reap more than we sow. For example, a farmer can plant about 1 2/3 bushels of barley per acre and he will reap about 54 bushels per acre.

By the design of God, the seed sown is multiplied many times. The farmer has nothing to do with it.

However, the fifth law – We Reap in Proportion to What we Sow – deals with human responsibility.

If the farmer only planted 1 bushel per acre, his harvest would be considerably smaller. God determines how much the seed is multiplied.

The farmer determines how much seed he will sow.

In the area of Christian living, this law tests our faith.

It tells us that how much we receive rests with us.

If we sow sparingly, we will reap sparingly.

If we sow bountifully, we will reap bountifully. This is God's

law.

It is not telling us what might happen, but what always occurs. With confidence in God's wisdom, love, and ability, our challenge is to sow to the fullest of our potential and leave the results to God.

The more "good" we sow, the more God can bless our lives with good things.

I. The Background to this Law

We have a moral and spiritual responsibility to be generous. **Proverbs 11:24-26 There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.**

²⁵ The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

²⁶ He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.

1. God created within our world a principle of giving.

a. Every part of creation is designed to give for the good of the other parts.

A tree draws from the soil and from the air those things it needs to produce oxygen, timber, shade, and fruit.

The earth gives of its riches and resources to other living things.

The sun contributes its heat, energy, and even vitamin "D" for our nourishment.

b. The continuance of life depends upon each part of creation generously, unselfishly giving that which God designed it to give.

2. Man and society are not exempt from this law.

a. Scattering yields increase; hoarding (withholding more than is meet) **results in poverty.**

b. Generous people, whatever they give, are "made fat" – they flourish in soul and substance; and they are "watered" – meaning that you cannot give without receiving.

c. Those who withhold what others need are cursed while those who make it available are cheered. (Verse 26)

Proverbs 11:26 He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.

3. At whatever point we fail to give, both we and others suffer.

a. If the farmer refuses to plant his seed, the economy will suffer.

b. If a father is stingy with his time at home, his family will suffer.

c. When Christians fail to share the gospel, the church begins to die and those without Christ suffer.

4. Everywhere we practice generosity, both we and others will thrive. H.A. Ironside writes: **"No one ever loses by loving, nor becomes poor by giving."**

We reap according to the amount we sow. Luke 6:38b "For with the same measure...."

1. This not only applies to finances, but also to everything we must give – forgiveness, love, ministry and every area of human need.

2. The place to begin sowing is the place where we feel the greatest need.

a. If we are lacking in wisdom of God's Word, invest more time in reading and study.

b. If souls are not being saved, that is an indication that we need to give out more of the Gospel seed.

c. If you lack friends, give more of your friendship away.

Proverbs 18:24 A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother

In whatever area we give, Jesus has promised that we will receive more than we give and according to how much we give.

Bountiful sowing leads to bountiful reaping.

2 Corinthians 9:6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

Like the previous laws, this law can be both positive and negative.

Bountiful sowing, whether of the spirit or of the flesh, results in bountiful reaping.

However, the primary emphasis of this law in Scripture is positive.

Whether we are speaking of material goods, spiritual service or personal investments into the lives of others, the more bountifully we sow, the more abundantly we will receive.

II. The Basis for this Law

God's character

1. This law is rooted in the fact that it is God's nature to give.
2. The Bible states that we can expect God to be generous with His blessings. **Ephesians 3:20** tells us that God is able and desires to do for us:
 - a. ALL that we can ask or think.
 - b. ABOVE all that we can ask or think.
 - c. Exceedingly ABUNDANTLY above all that we can ask or think.

God's plan

1. Bountiful sowing should always be done according to Biblical principles.

A response of love, not greed.

Compare to

John 3:16 & 1 John 4:11

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

1 John 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

b. Honoring God.

See Philippians 4:18 "a sacrifice ... wellpleasing to God."

Philippians 4:18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.

c. Given generously.

2 Corinthians 9:6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

God measures what we have sown not by the amount we have given, but by what we have left over.

When the widow cast two small coins into the temple treasury while others cast in much, Jesus said, **"This poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: for all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had." Mark 12:43-44**

d. Not given as a substitute for giving ourselves.

2 Corinthians 8:5 And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.

Any child will tell you that he would rather have his daddy than a toy.

It is often easier to give money or things than it is to give our time or service.

2. Though we give knowing that we will receive, that is never our primary motive. We sow to reap to have more to sow, not simply to profit personally.

III. Applying this Law (Ecclesiastes 11:1-6)

**Ecclesiastes 11:1-6 Cast thy bread upon the waters:
for thou shalt find it after many days.**

² Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.

³ If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.

⁴ He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.

⁵ As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.

⁶ In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.

You have heard it said that there is a fine line between faith and foolishness.

Most of us never have to worry about crossing that line.

If anything, we are too cautious when it comes to exercising faith.

We don't "**cast our bread upon the waters**" for fear we might go hungry.

Not knowing "**what evil shall be upon the earth**" we are more likely to look out for "Number 1" instead giving a portion to seven or eight.

The conditions must be just right before we take what we will call a step of faith.

In this passage, Solomon warns of the danger of being overly cautious, of relying upon perfect circumstances to determine when and how we sow. I find the following truths in this passage.

Life is uncertain but give anyway.

1. To cast bread upon the waters was one way of describing the shipping industry of that day.

a. Shipping by sea was a risky business. Boats were fragile, the weather unpredictable. Ships were prone to attack by pirates, to sink in a storm, or otherwise lose their cargo.

b. Often, it took months for a ship to make the round trip. Once the ship left port, it may not be heard from again until it returned to the dock.

2. Why then would anyone take the risk?

Because the profit was greater than the investment.

Often enough, after many days, the ships returned, and the shipper's faith was rewarded.

Verse 2 could be interpreted, "**Send out cargo on seven or eight ships, for you don't know what calamity awaits.**"

The more you send, the more likely it is that some will return.

In other words, the measure of return is determined by the amount put at risk.

Life is uncertain, but God is always faithful.

1. Life is unpredictable. **Verses 3-4**

a. The clouds may be full of rain, but who can tell where it will fall? Have we not seen Amarillo would get an inch of rain when Lubbock received none?

b. If the wind blows down a tree, it may fall in any direction – harmlessly onto the street or tragically upon your new car.

c. What Solomon is telling us is that these circumstances are beyond our control.

You waste your time worrying about them.

You waste your opportunities if you wait for circumstances that are free from risk.

2. We cannot second-guess the ways of God, but we can trust Him to keep his Word and reward our faith.

Verses 5-6

a. The only way we can come to grips with the uncertainty of life is to sow our seed and trust God with the results – regardless.

b. We are to sow morning and evening – at every opportunity – and patiently wait for God to give the harvest.

Don't be stingy with your life.

Sow all you can, knowing that you will reap in proportion to the amount sown.