

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 FOUR: WE REAP MORE THAN WE SOW**

**TEXT: MARK 4:1-8 (esp. Verse 8)**

**Mark 4:1-8 And he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.**

**<sup>2</sup> And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine,**

**<sup>3</sup> Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow:**

**<sup>4</sup> And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.**

**<sup>5</sup> And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:**

**<sup>6</sup> But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.**

**<sup>7</sup> And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.**

**<sup>8</sup> And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.**

In this parable, Jesus said that the seed that fell on good ground increased **(verse 8)**.

A single grain grew to be a plant that produced thirty, sixty, or a hundred more seeds.

Reaping more than we sow is fundamental to the laws of the harvest. Every farmer lives by this principle.

If his work only returned exactly what he had planted in the ground, his labor would be futile. He would never gain anything extra with which to feed his family or sell for a profit.

For example, consider the potential of one kernel of corn. One kernel of corn will produce one corn stalk. On the average, each stalk will produce three ears.

The average ear of corn has 250 kernels, so that a single kernel of corn will yield a 750% increase.

The harvest is always greater than the seed planted – whether we are speaking of agriculture or the things of our lives. We invariably reap more than has been sown.

This fact is both serious and sobering, and it applies equally to the Christian and the unbeliever. Whatever a person sows, whether good or bad, he will reap the benefits or the consequences in a significantly greater proportion.

Of course, there are exceptions to this law because we live in a fallen world. A farmer may have his crops destroyed by drought, and we know that bad things can happen to good people.

But even in these instances, God's law is not set aside. If we look at the whole of a life, or all the seasons of harvest, we will find that as a general principle, we reap the same in kind as we have sown (Law 2) and we reap more than we have sown

## I. Biblical Expressions of this Law

### **Proverbs 22:8**

#### **"He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity..."**

1. Vanity is from a Hebrew word that is also translated "iniquity," "wickedness," "affliction," or "mischief."
  - a. Whereas the word translated iniquity emphasizes the deed done, the word translated vanity emphasizes the consequences.
  - b. Twice (in **Deuteronomy 26:14 and Hosea 9:4**) it is translated as a form of "mourning" and is associated with death.
2. This verse is telling us that when a person sows' iniquity or unrighteousness, they reap adversity and sorrow.

### **Hosea 8:7a "For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind...."**

1. Whirlwind represents the harvest in kind (Law 2) that comes from sowing the wind. But it also represents the concept of more.
  2. A whirlwind is a violent, or fierce, wind – such as a tornado.
    - a. Israel's expression of displeasure with God (by turning to idols and foreign nations for help) is viewed as a "wind."
    - b. God's displeasure and resulting judgment is pictured as a whirlwind. The idea is that you may sow a breeze, but you'll reap a gale.

### **Luke 6:38 "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over...."**

1. Jesus doesn't specify what is to be given (or sown). However, He does promise that whatever we give, we shall receive IT (the same in kind) back again, but more abundantly.
2. A similar promise is made in Malachi 4:10 concerning the tithe – a blessing returned so great that there will not be room enough to receive it.

## **II. Illustrations of this Law**

### **David (2 Samuel 12:9-12)**

**2 Samuel 12:9-12 Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.**

**<sup>10</sup> Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.**

**<sup>11</sup> Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun.**

**<sup>12</sup> For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.**

David is a well-known example of this law from a negative perspective. He sowed iniquity and he reaped trouble.

What he began as a little wind blew through his house like a whirlwind. Let's look at the consequences of David's sin.

Carefully note how he reaped the same in kind and much more than he sowed.

1. **David defiled one's man wife.** As a result, one of his daughters was raped by her stepbrother and his son Absalom defiled many of his wives.
2. **David had one man murdered.** In time, four of his sons died premature deaths, three of them by violence – the illegitimate child, Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah.
3. **David sinned secretly.** The consequences he suffered happened openly.

### **The Widow of Zarephath**

**1 Kings 17:8-16 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,**

**<sup>9</sup> Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.**

**<sup>10</sup> So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.**

**<sup>11</sup> And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.**

**<sup>12</sup> And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.**

**13 And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son.**

**14 For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth.**

**15 And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days.**

**16 And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Elijah.**

1. When Elijah came to the widow's house, she only had a "handful of meal in a barrel and a little oil in a cruse," enough for one meager meal.

2. When she "sowed" it in obedience to the Lord's command, she reaped a continuous supply of meal and oil that fed Elijah and her family for "many days."

3. What she gave was given back to her in abundant measure as God had promised. Compare to **Luke 6:38. Luke 6:38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.**

### Jesus and the Disciples

1. Jesus selected twelve men and for three years "sowed" most of his instruction and example into their lives.

a. Though Christ ministered to the multitudes, he was never with any group of people very long other than his disciples.

b. He kept them with him, taught them privately, and entrusted them with implementing and fulfilling the Great Commission.

c. When Christ was killed, it was assumed that the little movement he had initiated would die with Him.

2. In Ephesians 2:19-20,

**Ephesians 2:19-20 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; <sup>20</sup> And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;**

Paul states that the household of God (the church) is built upon the foundation of the apostles.

a. The entire Christian movement grew up out of the ministry of those twelve men (including Paul).

b. The seed planted by Jesus is still producing fruit today as the Gospel continues to go out throughout our world in obedience to the Great Commission.

3. Along the same lines, **Hebrews 2:10** states that God sacrificed his One Son to bring many sons into glory.

**III. Applications of this Law (See 1 Corinthians 15:58)**

**1 Corinthians 15:58** Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

The time we spend in evangelism is not in vain. God has sent us to reap (**John 4:38**) and he will use our witness to win others to Christ.

The time we invest in service is not in vain. We never know how God will use our words or acts of service to influence others.

In 1867, an old preacher by the name of Henry Varley led a prayer meeting in London. Not many remember him, but one night he challenged the small crowd who came to his service with this thought:

**"The world has yet to see what God can do with one man wholly committed to him."**

A discouraged young preacher by the name of Dwight L. Moody was present that night. He took the words to heart and was greatly used of God for the next 32 years to win thousands to Christ. A little seed was sown, and the harvest was great.

In 1850, a snowstorm struck the town of Colchester, England. On Sunday morning, the snow was so deep that it was nearly impossible to get around. Only a handful of people managed to make it to the Methodist chapel, and the pastor was not one of them.

One deacon was present – a tall, thin, frail looking man. He at first considered sending the few people away, but decided it was his duty to give them something from the Scripture.

He chose as his text **Isaiah 45:22, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth."**

For about 10 minutes he rambled on, doing the best he could. Then he happened to notice a young man sitting near the back.

**"Young man, you look very miserable, and you will always be miserable – miserable in life, miserable in death – until you obey this text. Young man, look to Jesus Christ. You have nothing to do but to look and live."**

The young man responded to the earnest appeal and accepted Christ. He was sixteen, and his name was Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

Each of these unknown, faithful men of God sowed a tiny seed of service, and reaped a harvest that far exceeded their wildest imagination.

They are modern examples of the "much more" principle of this Law of the Harvest. You may not think you have much talent or ability, but if you will dedicate what you have to the Lord and let Him "sow" it where He will, you, too, may be surprised at the abundance you will reap in return.

**The time we spend "sowing the wind" of iniquity is always in vain.**

1. It brings trouble and sorrows into our lives.
2. It often brings trouble and sorrow into the lives of our family members and friends.

**CONCLUSION:** Remember this principle: the harvest is always greater than the seed planted, whatever it may be.