

## THE LAW OF SOWING AND REAPING

God has built His universe on laws. We find them from A to Z, from Astronomy to Zoology. Sometimes people boast of breaking laws. More often than not, the laws break us. The law of gravity has not diminished or changed. What goes up, must come down. And we can thank the great Christian scientist Sir Isaac Newton for helping us in our definition. As we have been studying, we have come to the realization that the Law of Moses, inviolable as it is, cannot save us. Like the law of gravity when we attempt to break it, it will yank us down to reality. If we use the law as a standard to justify ourselves, we fail. Psalm 130:3 makes it very clear, "If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" Throughout our study of Galatians, we are reminded with every lesson that there is only one way we may overcome, i.e., by grace through faith! How does a massive 747 ascend into the sky to 35,000 feet and travel at 600 miles per hour? It is governed by the law of aerodynamics. As the massive jet makes its way down the runway, you can feel the law of gravity holding it down, even at a high rate of speed. Then the moment comes that the law of aerodynamics takes over and we are lifted. The law of gravity was not broken, it was simply overwhelmed by a greater force. Romans 8:2: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

In our message today, we see what happens when a person applies or refuses to apply the victorious principle of faith-life lived through the overwhelming power of the Holy Spirit. Philippians 2:13: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

James Dwight Dana of Yale University, believed by many to be the most eminent geologist America ever produced, addressed a graduating class at Yale University with these words, "Young men, as you face scientific problems, remember that I, an old man, who have known only science all my life say to you there is nothing truer in the universe than the scientific statements in the word of God." This is evidenced in such passages as Job 26:7; Isaiah 40:22 and Job 38:14.

God absolutely governs the moral and spiritual world within us with just as much law and order and consistency as He has the physical world outside us.

### I. THE PRESENCE OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

Galatians 6:6

This is a connecting verse from our last study. As we bear our own unique burdens and as we carry the burdens of others, we find that the association with our brothers and sisters in Christ will have a positive deterrent to sin. Sadly, the association with ungodly people will give the opposite affect (Proverbs 13:20).

## II. THE POWER OF THE PROMISES OF GOD

Galatians 6:7, 8

For believers or unbelievers, this is a universal law. If you drive your car at 100 miles per hour into a brick wall, you will find that the wall has no more respect for the believer than it does for the unbeliever. In blessing or cursing, God's promises are true. If you drink or smoke, do you think you will by-pass the debilitating effects to the liver and lungs?

God says, "Don't be deceived!" Deceived is translated from the Greek word, "planaζw" (planao), which means to deceive or to be led astray and seduced. The word "mocked" comes to us from the Greek word, "mukthri÷zw (mukterizo); the rendering is referring to someone who "turns the nose up to" or "make mouths to." If you can imagine someone sarcastically snarling at someone else in ridicule, you've got the picture.

A. Our heart will deceive us: Jeremiah 17:9; Obadiah, verses 3 and 4; I John 1:8.

B. The Devil will deceive us: Revelation 12:9.

C. Evil men will deceive us: II Timothy 3:13; Matthew 24:4, 5; I John 4:3.

A few years ago a well know magazine ran an article making the statement that Ernest Hemingway had proven that you could do everything you wanted to do with no consequence. The blasphemous writer went on to say, "the old Victorian ideas of the Bible that the wages of sin is death and that what you sow you shall reap have all been proven to be a lie. The article unashamedly bragged of Hemingway's amoral behavior and praised him to the skies. Ten years later to the very month that the article was written Earnest Hemingway took his favorite shotgun and took his life. You don't want to face the God of whom you sarcastically mock. Hebrews 10:31 warns us, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

The Bible gives proof of the fact of sowing and reaping from one end of the inspired Book to the other. Hosea 8:7 and 10 say, "For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind: it hath no stalk: the bud shall yield no meal: if so

be it yield, the strangers shall swallow it up. Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you." Please compare these verses: Romans 1:18; Job 4:8; Proverbs 1:31; Proverbs 11:18; Esther 7:10; Proverbs 13:21; Isaiah 3:11; Isaiah 59:12; Romans 2:9. The Bible says it in Numbers 32:23 and it is so, "But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out."

Sinclair Lewis was the toast of literary world, The world praised him as a great writer. But he mocked God and his people when he wrote a blatant mockery of Christianity called Elmer Gantry who was envied by the worldlings because he seemingly had everything, money, women, fame, the whole nine yards. Yet many of those same people that praised him were unaware that he died a slobbering alcoholic in a third-rate clinic somewhere in Italy. You can't violate God's laws and get away with it. Oscar Wilde, the English play-write who, although brilliant and gifted, was incarcerated as a homosexual in shame and disgrace. In his plight, he wrote these words, "I forgot somewhere along the line that what you are in secret you will someday cry aloud from the housetop."

Lord Byron, perhaps the most admired of the Romantic writers sowed all his life to the flesh. He lived a wild, immoral life with no restraints or governors. When he came to the end of his short-lived life, knowing that his dishonorable harvest was approaching, he wrote these words, " "My days are in the yellow leaf; The flowers and fruits of Love are gone; The worm — the canker, and the grief Are mine alone!"

The late theologian, John Stott said, "Every time we allow our mind to harbor a grudge, nurse a grievance, entertain and in pure fancy, wallow in self-pity we are sowing to the flesh. Every time we linger in bad company whose insidious influence we know we cannot resist, every time we lie in bed when we ought to be up and praying, every time we read pornographic literature, every time we take a risk that strains our self control, we are sowing, sowing to the flesh."

The words of Scripture are replete with examples of the corruption that comes to those who sow to the flesh. But equally so, the Bible gives us plenty of examples of the life that is blessed with eternal benefits from sowing to the Spirit. We reap everlasting life! Eternal life is more than quantitative. It is quality! If we sin, we forfeit joy, peace and love. If we, through the Holy Spirit power, sow righteousness, we reap joy, peace and love.

### III. THE PAYBACK FOR PERSISTENCE IN GOD'S WORK

Galatians 6:9, 10

The word "weary" is translated from "ejkkake÷w" (ekakeo) which is a word used of a farmer who begins to slacken his exertion because of fatigue. We find

these verses of encouragement to keep-on-keeping-on in the Scripture: II Corinthians 4:1, 7; I Corinthians 15:58; II John, verse 8; I Peter 2:15.

The martyred missionary, Jim Elliot said it best when he wrote shortly before his death, “He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”

James 5:7 reminds us, “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.”

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Johnny Pope". The signature is written in black ink and features a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.