

Remunerative and Retributive Justice (Galatians 6:7c-8).

Have you ever heard the following?

- “It’s only a matter of time.”
- “The writing’s on the wall.”
- “When it rains, it pours.”
- “What goes around comes around.”
- “The chickens will come home to roost.”
- “Payday someday.”
- “Sooner or later, it catches up with you.”

These common idioms are similar to Paul’s Galatian truth. Even the world can acknowledge the truth of Paul’s sowing and reaping principle. Paul states the fundamental truth in verse 7 and describes it in verse 8. These are farming terms used to show that seeds produce only the fruit they were made to (Genesis 1:11-12).

We might call positive sowing and reaping as remuneration. This is profitable[7], as the good that one does results in good being extending back. On the other hand, retribution is negative and involves punishment. The bad that one does is met with unfortunate consequences. This is not Karma, seeing it does not involve reincarnation. Sinners who plant seeds of destruction should not expect anything less.

The Bible clearly and often, plays the same tune played by the apostle Paul. Read these passages: Job 4:8; Proverbs 1:31; Proverbs 22:8; Luke 16:25; Romans 2:6-9; 2 Corinthians 9:6; Romans 8:13; 2 Peter 2:12). The principle is simple, the math equation elementary. As one observed “Paul does not say you reap what you meant to sow, or what you claimed you sowed, or what you wish you had sown”[8] he says that you reap what you sow. God will punish sin and reward faithfulness, it is that fundamental. It is foolish to believe and practice otherwise. “Horatio Bottomley – A British politician convicted of fraud. In prison, he was assigned to sew mailbags. A chaplain asked, “Sewing, Bottomley?” He replied, “No, reaping.”

The sowing and reaping principle may not always happen immediately, in equality, or fairly. Notice:[9]

Some will reap at a different time than when one sowed (1 Timothy 5:24-25). Usually trees come years

later after the seed is planted. Criminals are not always booked the day of their crime, sometimes it happens years later. Sinners may not be punished for their sins during their lifetime; remember time is not a factor in God’s court (2 Peter 3:8). For the sinner, judgement is definite, even if they have to wait a lifetime to get it.

Some will reap more than what they sowed (Hosea 8:7; cf. 2 Samuel 12:12). Apple seeds don’t just produce apples; they produce seeds within each apple.[10] Some sow pennies and reap dollars. Others sow dollars and reap pennies. But sinners, sow sin and reap Hell; a far worse punishment than death. It has been said “sow a thought, reap an act; sow an act, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character, reap a destiny.”

Some will reap what others sowed (2 Samuel 12:10-14). People buy houses from families who planted tree seeds long ago, but this new family is only reaping from the family who sowed. Sometimes man sows what sinners reap. It could be consequences or punishments. This is life’s disappointment, but it happens.

Seeing these things are true man would do well to take care of sin now so as to not have to face off something worse later. It will come; man can count on it. He should be ready to meet His Maker with a faithful life. Tempting God one of the devil’s favorite tools. Nahum sums up our study quite well: “The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked” (Nahum 1:3). How dare we dare God!

Endnotes

[1]Cambridge Dictionary

[2]The word “flesh” is sometimes used in the New Testament to refer to the Law of Moses (Romans 7:5). While we are unsure as to the exact situation here in Galatia, it might be that the Christians were financially supporting the Judaizing teachers (“flesh”) and refusing to support Christian teachers (“Spirit”). This idea comes from an outside source, unfortunately, unrecorded by the author.

[3]]Note the phrase “three hours” in verse 7. God gave Sapphira time to repent.

[4]John Stacy, Preaching through Galatians, p. 244.

[5]<https://http://cachurchofchrist.com/sermons/temples/BI-137-%20Laws%20of%20Sowing%20and%20Reaping.pdf>

[6]Strong’s Concordance and Thayer

[7]<https://www.etymonline.com/word/remunerative>

[8]<https://http://cachurchofchrist.com/sermons/temples/BI-137-%20Laws%20of%20Sowing%20and%20Reaping.pdf>

[9]Points come from

https://comeafterme.com/web_documents/English/Lessons/The-Law-of-Sowing-and-Reaping.pdf

[10]David Guzik

DARING

GOD



NOAH OLSON

WORDS WRITTEN
ON THE HEART

Proverbs 3:3

“I double dog dare you.” Do you remember hearing this on the playground? What about “Yeah I bet you won’t do anything to me?” Did you ever utter the words before misbehaving “I won’t get caught?” A dare is a challenge that involves a risk.[1] It is common among teens, adults, and people in sin. We might refer to daring in the Bible as testing. Toward God, we might refer to it tempting or daring God.

It is a grave sin to tempt God (Deuteronomy 6:16; 1 Corinthians 10:9). While God cannot be tempted with evil (James 1:13) the test here is like a challenge. Illustratively, to tempt God would be like a man who would poke an animal with a stick, seeing if it would attack him. Or it might be like a child who pokes his sibling, waiting for an angry response. Sinners test God by remaining in their sins and not expecting God to do anything about it.

Paul wrote the churches of Galatia through one letter (Galatians 1:2). The theme of the letter is an admonition against these brethren for falling into the trap of Judaism (Galatians 1:6-9; 3:1; 5:1-4). In chapter 6, Paul addressed restoration of erring brethren (Galatians 6:1-5) and immediately, he writes on the obligation of supporting Christian teachers (Galatians 6:6). Apparently, some had been neglecting to financially support them. Instead, perhaps they were supporting teachers of the “flesh”[2] (Galatians 6:8). Paul’s conclusion is the point of interest for our study:

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not (Galatians 6:7-9).

Deciding to support the flesh over the Spirit would not go unnoticed. Their financial sins would only result in condemnable outcomes. They could be sure of it.

The application of Galatians 6:7-9 stretches farther than financial sins. It provides us a picture of how some view

their sins and God’s punishment of them. God will not overlook the fleshly seeds you plant—He will come to cut them down (Matthew 15:13). Let’s consider this application.

Man Believes He Can Get Away with Sin (Galatians 6:7a).

Criminals continually commit crimes because they think they will not get caught. They think this only because after ever successful attempt, they were not caught. They assumed this would happen again and again and that their actions would go unnoticed. Only soon do they find out their distorted thinking. Sinners think the same way.

In this text, Paul used the word *planao* translated “deceived” to describe what man does to himself. It is a deception to think that one’s earthly sins are weightless in eternity. Many have thought this to be true (Job 22:13-14; Psalm 10:11; Isaiah 5:18-19; Isaiah 29:15; Ezekiel 8:12; Amos 9:10; Obadiah 1:3; Micah 3:11; Zephaniah 1:12; Matthew 4:5-7; Acts 5:1-9[3]; Matthew 16:1; 19:3; John 8:6. Any time a person knows the truth and refuses to do it, or sins and refuses to repent, he is tempting God. They are testing whether God will punish them or not.

John Stacy said, “We cannot live like the Devil and die like a saint.”[4] It is wrong to believe that current problems have no futural consequences. It is unhealthy to be a spiritual smoker: thinking that remaining alive means that smoking is not harmful. It is also “like the man who jumped off the Empire State building...He passed floor after floor, and after every floor, he said, “Well, so far, so good!”[5] People in sin who remain in sin will die in sin, because they refused to believe God would punish them for their behavior. Jesus preached this truth to the disciples (Matthew 24:48-51). The longer one retains this thought process, the harder it will be as the days progress to return (Proverbs 29:1).

God Cannot and Will Not Overlook Any Sin (Galatians 6:7b).

Sinners act the way they do because they don’t fear punishment. They do not believe God will do anything

about their behavior. This dare is damnably dangerous. Little do people know that God CANNOT do this as it would contradict His character.

In daring God to punish them for their behavior, sinners mock God. Paul used the word *muterizo* and it means to ridicule, make mouths at, or turn up the nose at.[6] Paul did not suggest that God has never been mocked, but he means that God will not allow the mockers to get away with their sin and make Him look like a fool. Sinners mock God in believing:

- He justifies sin. God claps when they sin.
- He does not punish sin. God withholds the whip.
- He chooses grace over law. God extends mercy without judgement for lawbreakers.

Sinners who think God is not involved in their lives are mistaken multifold!

God will punish sin. Peter explained this principle when he wrote about false prophets who seemed to get away with their sins (2 Peter 2:1-9; 3:4-9). Peter showed that while God was patient, their punishment was coming. Illustratively, he provided three examples to further his argument, showing that the angels (2 Peter 2:4), the old world (2 Peter 2:5), and Sodom and Gomorrah (2 Peter 2:6-8) all were punished. God waited to punish the last two to provide an opportunity to repent but there was none.

A prolonged life does not equate to faithfulness; it merely provides evidence of God’s patience (Ecclesiastes 8:11-13). The wicked are reserved for judgement (Job 21:30) and nothing can be hidden from God’s plain view (Jeremiah 23:23-24). God waits because He wants to save. Jesus illustrated the truism in the parable of the tares (Matthew 13:24-30). The lord’s refusal to uproot the tares exemplifies divine patience. However, they were soon rooted up at the harvest and thrown into the fire. Sinners who (1) believe that God delights in sin are blasphemous, (2) think that God forgets sin are mistaken, and (3) act as if God is passive toward sin are mockers. Moses told Israel “BE SURE your sin will find you out” (Numbers 32:23, emp. mine, NO). Sowing your wild oats is not encouraged by the Bible.