



Life Group Study Notes

“The Power of the Seed: Sowing & Reaping”

Sr. Ps. James Lowe - November 4, 2018

Warm Up (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question to answer, or ask another. No right or wrong

- What is a habit that you have that you learned from one of your parents?
- What is a desirable habit that you've found difficult to develop?
- What do you enjoy doing when you have time off?

Word (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at www.bethelworld.org

Galatians 6:7-10 ESV Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. 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. And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

God Time

God is sovereign. He has purposes and goals which are higher than our own. His ways and strategies are superior to ours and at times are at odds with ours. Sometimes his timing is very different than ours. We need to trust his wisdom and goodness in those times.

There is a bamboo seed that has a long germination period from the time it is sown until it sprouts above the ground. For the first five years it doesn't surface. Yet during this time, it is still active and needs appropriate nutrients and water. Once it sprouts, it grows to a height of nearly ninety feet in a brief period of about six weeks.

Sometimes we may think that nothing is coming from the good that we have done. We lose patience with God's ways and become tempted to take matters into our own hands and do things our way. Instead, we need to persevere in doing good and wait on God who makes all things beautiful in his timing.

Seed Time

We have a privilege, a responsibility, and an opportunity to participate in advancing God's kingdom. We are commanded to think good and to do good. We are called to dwell on the

truth of God's revelation and to live according to it. When we do, we are in effect sowing seeds for the future benefit of our own lives and the lives of others.

Our entire lives are a continual act of sowing seeds. We are constantly sowing either good or bad seeds, seeds that sow to things that please God or to things that displease God. We cannot escape this. God has designed us and this world so that this principle is always at work. This is good, for we are empowered by God to participate with him in shaping our future and the future of the world.

Harvest Time

The outcomes are unavoidable. Everything we dwell on eventually influences the way we see the world. Our deep thoughts shape our values, our choices, our course of life, and our ultimate outcomes. What we think and what we do matters.

If we do what pleases God, we invite God's blessings into our souls and lives. If we do what displeases God, we may still be loved by God, but we do not invite God's blessings. Instead, we will experience damage and may even invite God's discipline and punishment.

We can tell what we have sown by what comes forth in our lives. Paul contrasts the works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:16-24), exhorting us to use our freedom to sow to the Spirit. We need the help of the Holy Spirit to do this. Thankfully, God has given us his Spirit because of what Jesus has done for us on the cross. We can lean into him and learn to walk with him, so that we can do the things that please God.

The ultimate culmination of sowing and reaping is the Day of Judgment when God will judge everyone for what they have done. He will punish or reward everyone for their words, their deeds, and their motives. Those who belong to Christ will inherit everlasting, immortal life.

Discussion (10-15 minutes)

Choose one of the points, and discuss how the lesson applies to our lives.

- How has God's timing been different than your preferred timing?
- What is an example in your own life of sowing to the Spirit in opposition to the "flesh"?
- Give an example from your own life of reaping a good harvest from God.

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Pray any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- Thank God for the gift of his Spirit who helps us to do the things that please God.
- Ask God to show you where you've been sowing bad seeds and how to change that.
- Ask God to give you his perspective regarding the timing of his harvest for you.