

Sowing the Wind

by Chuck Smith

In 'Sowing the Wind', Chuck Smith emphasizes the importance of understanding the consequences of our actions and living purposefully to reap a fruitful life.

Duration: 25:56

Scripture: Hosea 8:7, Amos 6:1, Luke 9:23-24, Galatians 6:1-9

Topics: "Sowing And Reaping", "Righteous Living"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the principle of sowing and reaping, highlighting the consequences of our actions and the importance of sowing seeds of righteousness and value. It warns against living a self-centered life that leads to emptiness and encourages living for Jesus Christ to find true joy and fulfillment. The message urges self-reflection on the seeds we are sowing in our lives and the impact they have on ourselves and others.

Transcript

For our scripture reading today, let's turn to Galatians, chapter 6, and our reading will be the first nine verses. I'll read the first and the outnumbered verses, and Pastor Brian will lead you in the reading of the even-numbered verses through verse 9. Shall we stand as we read the Word of God? Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

If a man thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden.

Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. 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. Let's pray. Father, we ask you to help us to understand and to really abide by this principle that we reap what we sow.

Lord, there are so many people that are deceived in this area, thinking that they can go out and just sow the wild oats and then reap a good harvest. But Lord, help us to realize that what we do comes back in kind. And thus, Lord, may we seek to be sowing to the things of the Spirit, things that will produce good fruit.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. You may be seated.

Well, we're in the book of Hosea. And tonight we will finish the book of Hosea, going through chapters 8 through 14. But this morning we'd like to draw your attention to chapter 8, verse 7, where the prophet declares, For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind.

It hath no stalk, the bud shall yield no meal, and if it so be that it yields the strangers, shall swallow it up. Prudent men look ahead to see the potential of the consequences of their actions. They look before they leap.

I trust that I am talking to people today who have enough wisdom to look ahead and consider the consequences of what they are doing. For we are all of us sowing seeds. We hear of those of whom it is said that they are sowing their wild oats.

But we need to remember that if you sow wild oats, you're going to be reaping wild oats. And that's what people fail often to realize. Or they spend their youth sowing wild oats, and then they spend much of their adult life praying that it won't produce any fruit, that somehow it will die.

Here the prophet speaks about sowing the wind. Quite obvious that a strong wind is not the time or the place to sow your seed. The wind can carry it away, and it can be spread all over the place.

And rather than having a uniform crop, you'll reap a strong disaster. History proves this with some great examples. I think of the French Revolution.

The horrible treatment of the poor by the rich, treating them with less dignity than an animal, forcing them to pull the plows personally, keeping them in abject poverty and oppression, while on the other hand they lived in such opulent luxury, until that fateful day came, known in history as the French Revolution and the horrible bloodbaths. The owners of the land in that country treated the peasantry worse than they treated their animals. Poor and almost naked men could be seen dragging a plow over the soil themselves, and they were reduced to such poverty by the excessive rents that they could not afford to keep the animals to do the hard work.

The kings and the princes and the great ones of the land cared for nothing but their own pleasures, and those pleasures were often of the most vile kind. Read the first chapters of Carlyle's French Revolution, see what a horrible state France was in, and for a time everything seemed to go favorably for the oppressors, and if the peasantry revolted, they were put down with an iron hand. The mighty rulers thought that their empire would never come to an end, and they thought their kingdom would last forever, and yet one after another, those kings and nobles who sowed the wind, at the end they reaped the whirlwind.

Having themselves defied all of the laws of justice, they had taught the people to do the same, and when the masses once rose in rebellion and got the upper hand, you know how they worked the terrible guillotine, and how the streets not only in Paris, but in many of the other cities and towns, were filled with blood, and the oppressors were made to realize that their cruelty and oppression had come home to them

at last. It is always so, sooner or later, according to God's rule of righteous government, men may stretch the cord for a long time, but when it reaches its limits, it snaps, and woe be to those that are holding it when it gives way. The people may be for a time trodden down beneath the tyrant's foot, but in the long run, the tyrant gets the worst of it.

You can only sow to the wind so long, until you find yourself reaping the whirlwind. Even small digressions have a potential of bringing great catastrophes. Certain of the land in Holland is protected from the intrusion of the ocean by these dikes that have been built.

But let us say that a man is living next to one of these dikes, and he decides that he would like to bring just a little ocean water onto his land, and he decides to drill a hole through the dike there near his property. As he completes the hole through that dike, and the water begins to flow, what happens is that the more it flows, the more it erodes away the dike, until the dike itself is destroyed and the land is flooded. As the man cries out, God forbid that I should be blamed for this catastrophe.

I never intended to do anything of this sort. And yet, his actions produce the results, and he must be held responsible for it. Be careful that you never term an action of yours as just a little evil, for if you open it, you will discover that you can be carried away with a great flow of evil.

Have you ever heard the story about Augustine, concerning the young man, he spoke of the young man, who at one time was a believer in God, and he had come to the place where he had given up all trust in God, and what happened is that he was irritated by these buzzing flies that would sting, and he was so irritated by them, he thought, these are such irritable little creatures, surely God could not have created these stinging flies. And so he concluded that Satan must have created them. Well then, other things that got under his skin, he began to say, well, Satan created that also, until ultimately he believed that Satan created everything, and that he became an unbeliever in God.

It's a terrible thing, as Augustine remarked, he that errs about a fly will soon be erring about all things. All of us are sowing seeds. It's important for us to really take a close look at ourselves, and ask just what kind of seeds am I sowing, because I need to realize that we reap in kind.

Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. You cannot go around sowing bitterness, strife, contentions, hatred, and evil, and hope to reap love and peace and sweetness. It just doesn't work that way.

You cannot sow to the flesh, and hope to reap of the Spirit. So the question that we need to be asking ourselves is, what kind of seeds am I sowing today? Much of what is sown does end in failure. Many people say, well, it's my business what I do to myself, and I'm not hurting anyone but myself, and so, you know, leave me alone.

It doesn't matter, because I'm the only one that's being hurt by my actions. I had a man tell me that one time. He had a real drinking problem.

His wife had called me because he was abusive. He had a couple of teenage boys, and he was definitely drinking too much and had become very abusive to the family, and so she wanted me to talk to him, and so I went over to talk to him, and he gave me this soul spiel. Well, you know, it only hurts me.

I know that I drink too much, and I know that it's not good for me, but it only hurts me, and so it's really nobody's business but my own, because I'm the only one being hurt by what I'm doing, and I tried to point

out to him, no, you're wrong on that. You've got these teenage sons, and they're watching you, and they're being influenced by the way you are living, and of course, your wife, she's being abused, and she's having such a hard time, and she called me to come and talk to you, but he just... Well, it only bothers me, and so it's my business, and if I want to hurt myself, that's my problem. Within six months of the time I talked to him, he was dead from his alcoholism.

However, over time, the two sons, as I followed them, one of them was in San Quentin on death row. The other son was also in San Quentin with a life sentence, but it did affect his sons tremendously, and of course, his wife was... She never did get over it, and it's tragic when a person thinks, well, it only hurts me. What I do doesn't really hurt others.

It just hurts me. No, the Bible says no man lives to himself. You have an influence on others, and whatever you do is like sowing seeds, and others can be affected by the crop that comes from it.

You ask some people, well, what are you sowing? And they say, oh, nothing. They have no aim or purpose in life. They're just sort of drifting through life.

But if you live an aimless life, you will end, as the text declares, it hath no stock. That is, there's no backbone. It can't stand up straight, bent over.

We don't really admire a spineless person. I dare say that I'm speaking to a large number of people today who really do not know just what are you living for. You come into this world.

You're existing. One day you'll die and pass out of this world, but never having accomplished anything of any real worthwhile nature. All that can be said is that you did nothing.

No noble ambitions. All you ever did was sow to the winds. And know this, that if you ever sow to the wind, all that you're ever going to reap is the wind, and oftentimes the whirlwind.

And God will say to you, I made you for my glory. I sent you into the world for a purpose. I endowed you with talents.

I made you a steward over my goods. So give an account of your stewardship. What are you going to say to God when he requires you to give an account of your stewardship? What you've done with the things that he's entrusted to you.

There are others who are sowing the wind in another form. They're living a selfish life. Self is the beginning and the ending of their existence.

Everything is done for self. They may enlarge themselves slightly by taking a wife and having children, but yet they're very selfish even within the home. And they sort of resent anything that the wife or the children might consume because they're thinking of themselves and they just cannot think of giving over to others because they're just hoarding for themselves.

It's possible for a man who lives for himself to, it's impossible that he can ever be satisfied with the desires and the cravings that he has for himself. He will always be demanding more. True contentment only comes when God is preeminent in your life, when you love your neighbor as yourself.

It may be said of the life of a man who lives for self, he has no stock, the bud shall yield no meal. He is as Solomon, who with all of his riches and fame and glory, looked at everything and said vanity, vanity, all is

vanity and vexation of spirit. Or emptiness, emptiness, everything is empty and you will find that your life becomes just that way.

Nothing is fulfilling, everything is just empty and leaves you empty. It seems that to obtain contentment he soon dies and they fight over his estate. He may have an impressive tombstone and the paper may announce his death saying that he died worth millions of dollars, but that isn't so.

He's not worth a cent. He's dead. I would encourage you to cast your self-centered life away.

As Jim Elliot said, no man is a fool who gives up that which he cannot keep in order to gain that which he cannot lose. Or as Luke tells us, that Peter said to Jesus, we have left all to follow you. And Jesus responded, no man has left houses or parents or brothers or his wife or children for the kingdom of God's sake who will not receive manifold more in this present time and in the world to come, life after life everlasting.

I would encourage you, cast away your self-centered life. Live for Jesus Christ and you'll find a life that is rich, fulfilling, meaningful, and worthwhile. He who casts his life away for Christ's sake and for the love of the truth shall ultimately save his life and find true joy and blessedness.

But for anyone to live for self is to sow to the wind and ultimately reaping the whirlwind. And so, as Hosea says, they have sown to the wind and they shall reap the whirlwind because they have no stock. The bud shall yield no meal and if it does yield, strangers will swallow it up.

An empty, useless life. Living for self. Living for your own pleasures, your own... to fulfill your own wishes.

It's going to leave you empty and it'll be... you're sowing the wind and you'll one day be reaping the whirlwind. Father, help us that we might take a close look at our lives and see what are we sowing. Are we really sowing to the flesh? Or are we sowing to the spirit? Are we sowing things that are going to bring permanent value, pleasure, fulfillment? Or are we sowing things that will ultimately lead to emptiness and to that hopelessness and to that vanity, vanity, all is vanity.

Lord, may we use real wisdom and you guide us, Lord. For we want our lives to really count for something. We don't want to just live an empty life and when we come to the end of the road, realize that we've accomplished nothing.

We've left nothing. It was just an empty life itself without purpose, without meaning. And Lord, help us that we will not be guilty of that.

But may we live in such a way that we can look and realize that I have done something that is worthwhile. Something that has eternal value. Something that will count for the kingdom of God.

And thus, Lord, may we live our lives sowing seeds of righteousness of joy, of love, of peace that we might, Lord, reap these things in our own lives. In Jesus' name, Father, we ask this. Amen.

Shall we stand? It's good to take inventory every once in a while to find out where you stand. You don't know if you're making a profit or a loss until the inventory comes in and then you realize where you stand, you know, as far as whether you're not going to be, continue on in business or not. And so, in our own lives, that personal inventory, as I look at the fruit that comes from my life, as I look at, you know, what fruit is coming from the planting that I have done.

Am I planting things that are producing eternal fruit and valuable fruit or just, is it just planting and doing things that are bringing forth emptiness and nothing coming forth really of any eternal value from what I am doing, how I am living. And so, the men are down here at the front this morning to pray for you. And if you realize that, you know, really, my life is going nowhere.

I'm not really accomplishing anything that has any eternal value and I really need to do something that is going to really count, you know, in the future. And maybe the Lord has spoken to your heart and you want to just sort of commit yourself fully to the Lord. I would encourage you to do that.

They're here to pray for you. So, just as we're dismissed, come on forward and say, pray for me. I want my life to really count for something worthwhile.

And I want to live for the Lord and just pray for me that God will help me to do things that will bring forth good fruit, wholesome fruit, fruit for the kingdom of God. And living, that's a great life and I would encourage you, live that kind of a life. So, they're here to pray for you.

We would encourage you, take advantage of it. Come on down, make that commitment of your life today to live for things that really matter, things that really count. The Lord bless thee and keep thee.

The Lord make His face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace. God bless you.

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