

Sowing & Reaping

OCTOBER BIBLE STUDY SERIES

NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH

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“Sowing & Reaping”

I. Sowing and Reaping

The Biblical principle of “Sowing & Reaping” teaches that you will ultimately harvest what you’ve planted in your life. It is a literal act of planting seeds and a metaphor for actions that produce consequences, with a central principle of “reaping what you sow”

1. Planting good seeds results in a bountiful harvest, spiritual harvest and eternal life.
2. Sowing to the flesh (sinful actions) leads to destruction

Example:

The Parable of the Sower

-illustrates that “seed” of God’s Word must find receptive hearts to yield a fruitful harvest

The Seed

-Represents the Word of God’s truth

The Sower

-Represents those spreading the Word and living out God’s teachings

The Soil

-Represents different human responses to the Word

Hard Soil

-The Word is snatched away by the evil one

Rocky Soil

-The Word is received joyfully but quickly fades

Good Soil

-The Word is heard, understood, and produces a bountiful spiritual harvest

A natural example:

A farmer planting seeds for collard greens:

-When he plants the seed (sow), the seed has to go through a process before they can spring up and grow; and he can reap his harvest.

Note:

- The process began to take place after he sowed the seed**
- He showed it cheerfully with expectation of a return**
- It was watered**
- The seed went through some changes - But the farmer never lost hope!**
- Everything happens at its appointed time, God's time!**

- **Generosity**

2 Corinthians 9:6-11 connects sowing to generosity, stating that those who sow generously will reap generously

- **You will Reap what you Sow**

Galatians 6:7, The kind of seed you plant determines the Kind of Harvest you will receive

- **Sow Bountifully, you will reap bountifully**
 - You must be patient and have perseverance because the harvest requires time and a steadfast effort in doing good.
 - It's crucial to sow spiritual seeds of kindness, love, and service, not with compulsion, but with a cheerful and faithful heart
- **You Reap in proportion to what you sow (2 Corinthians 9:6)**
 - If you sow sparingly, you will reap sparingly, but if you sow generously, you will reap generously.

Reaping takes Time (Galatians 6:9)

-There is a delay between sowing and reaping: the harvest comes in due season, so do not grow weary in well doing.

The Harvest is Greater than the Seed (2 Corinthians 9:10, 11:1)

-You will receive more than you give. God provides the seed for the sower and bread for the consumption and future planting, leading to multiplication

How to Apply the Principle

- **Sow to the Spirit**

-Instead of sowing to satisfy your flesh, which leads to corruption, sow to the spirit to receive eternal life.

- **Be a Cheerful Giver**

-Sowing is not just about money but also about time, love, encouragement, and service. Do so not grudgingly, but from the heart.

- **Sow with faith and perseverance**

-Trust that God will nurture your efforts. Continue to do good, even when it seems insignificant or when you face challenges, for in due time you will reap.

- **Do Good to All**

-Use your resources, time, and gifts to do good to all people, especially to those in the Household of faith.

II. Everything in the Earth has to Give back to God

This comes from the religious beliefs that God is the ultimate owner of all things and that everything in creation belongs to Him. We have a responsibility to act as stewards, or caretakers, of the earth, using and returning what God has entrusted to them.

- **Ownership**

-The Bible frequently states that God owns everything.

“The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, the world, and all who lives in it.” (Psalm 24:1)

- **Stewardship**

-Because God owns everything, humans are seen as entrusted with caring for the earth and its resources. This means using what God has given in a way that honors Him and for the benefit of others.

- **Return**

-The concept of giving back also relates to the idea of personal accountability. The Book of Ecclesiastes speaks of the body returning to the dust from which it came, and the spirit returning to God. (Ecclesiastes 12:7)

Note:

- **Job (Job 1:21)**

“Naked I came out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return”

-He realized the Lord gave and the Lord taketh away: may His name be praised.

-Everything, we have belonged to God

A. The seed has to give back

-is a concept found in Christian teachings, linked to sowing and reaping and reaping metaphors, where the “seed “can refer to money, efforts, or the Word of God, and “giving back” signifies acting with faith and obedience to receive spiritual or material “harvests” from God.

Ex: a kernel of wheat must fall to the ground and die to produce a new plant, symbolizing that sacrifice and surrender to God are necessary for spiritual growth and bearing fruit.

It also refers to returning blessings, including one's time, talents, and financial resources, to God as an act of worship and trust, expecting multiplication or a spiritual return.

B. Believers have to give back

1. Their finances, 10% of their Tithe unto God (Malachi 3:10)
2. "Seed Faith" sowing generously to God's Kingdom is an act of faith that can result in receiving blessings and a multiplication of what was given
3. Spiritual Sacrifice, believers are called to surrender their lives to God through selflessness and sacrifice, emulating Christ's example of growth and impact.
4. God provides the ability to produce that humans should "give back" what they receive through their actions and faith.

C. Faith & Obedience

-Giving back is about obedience and demonstrating trust in God, as Ultimate source.

D. Heart & Motive

-God is more interested in the heart and motive behind the seed sown, than the size of the seed itself.

E. God's Generosity

-God is a generous creator who provides for life through the earth, and the Concept of giving back to Him continues this principle of multiplication and fruitfulness.

“Giving”

In the Bible “Giving” encompasses selflessness, generosity, and stewardship of your resources, time and talents to God and others.

It is a fundamental act of love, trust, worship, gratitude, and obedience that reflects God’s own generous nature and a desire to build His Kingdom.

Giving is a demonstration of faith, with the understanding that all you possess ultimately belongs to God. You give from your heart unto the Lord. (Matthew 6:1-4)

Old Testament Example of Giving from the First Fruit & the Heart

- **Cain & Able (Genesis 4:3-8)**

-The Lord accepted and had respect for Abel’s offering, because he gave of his firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof. But unto Cain and his offering he had not respect. Cain was angry and it came to pass that he killed his brother.

Note:

- **Not being honest is sin, and once you sin, it can cause you to continue to sin. Cain went from lying to murder.**

New Testament Example about Lying from the Heart about their Money

- **Ananias & Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11)**

-They sold a possession and deceptively kept back some of the money, lying to the apostles and to the Holy Spirit about the true amount they received. They both dropped dead shortly after their lies were exposed by the Apostle Peter, causing great fear throughout the early church.

Note:

- **You cannot lie to the Holy Spirit, God already knows what you have. He allowed you the ability to get it. Withholding the truth is a lie.**

Seven Principles of Giving

Christian Principles of Giving

-From a Christian perspective, the principle for giving often emphasizes a spiritual motivation.

- 1. Stewardship:**
Recognize that everything you have belongs to God and you are merely a caretaker.
- 2. Cheerfulness:**
Give joyfully and not out of obligation or begrudgingly, as God loves a cheerful giver.
- 3. Sacrificial Giving:**
Give in a way that involves personal sacrifice, similar to the widow's offering.
- 4. First Fruit**
Give the First portion of your earnings or harvest to demonstrate trusts and prioritize God.
- 5. Meeting Needs:**
Give to support the church, missionaries and those in need, both within and outside the Christian community.
- 6. Discretion/ Secret Giving:**
Give privately to avoid judgment, envy, or comparison by others.
- 7. Faith-Driven Giving:**

Give even when you don't understand how you can afford it, replying on faith that God will provide.

Givers Gain

1. Give without Expectation

Offer help, advice, and resources without expecting anything specific in return.

2. Give More than Expected

Go the extra mile in your efforts to help others.

3. Give what you can afford

Contribute to others based on your available resources and capacity.

4. It's okay to Gain

Understand that while giving is the true focus, it is also acceptable and natural to receive benefits in return.

5. Show Gratitude

Express appreciation for the generosity you receive from others

6. Stay Humble

Be modest in your efforts to give and receive, avoiding boastfulness

Why We Give

1. To Please God

Giving is a sacrifice that is pleasing to God (Hebrews 13:16)

2. To Reflect Love

Giving is a demonstration of Love for God and others, and proof of faith in action

3. To show Stewardship

Believers are stewards of God's resources, and giving is a facet of managing what belongs to God

4. To Curb Greed

Generous giving can help to curb the desire for possessions and focus on

God's Kingdom rather than one's own

5. To Receive Blessings

The Bible teaches that God rewards generous giving, resulting in abundant blessings for the giver

How to Give

1. From the Heart

Give what you have decided in your heart, not out of compulsion or reluctantly

2. Cheerfully

God loves a cheerful giver who gives with joy and happiness

3. Freely and Willingly

Give as a voluntary act, showing a willing heart and free will towards God's work

4. Discreetly

Give to the poor without seeking public recognition praise from others

5. Spirit- Controlled

New Testament giving is guided by the Holy Spirit, leading to regular and systematic giving

Who to Give To

1. Your Church and Ministries

Give to support the Local church and other Ministries to further God's work

2. Those in Need

Give to meet the real needs of others, both within and outside the church

3. The Poor and Hungry

Provide for the less fortunate and meet their basic needs

What to Avoid

1. Grudging Giving

Do not give out of necessity or with a grudging spirit; it may not be accepted by God

2. Seeking Praise

Do not give to be admired by others; the intention should be to honor God

3. Giving to Impoverish Yourself

Strive to balance, as New Testament giving aims for equality and avoids impoverishing the giver

The Results of Giving

1. Abundance for Good Deeds

You will have Abundance of resources to do good works

2. Thanksgiving to God

Your giving will produce thanksgiving to God from the recipients

3. Glorifying God

Your generosity will cause others to glorify God

4. Stimulating Prayer

You will stimulate others to pray for you and express gratitude for God's provision's

Philippians 4:15-19

The church of Philippi was the only church that communicated with Paul concerning giving and receiving. He didn't need anything. In verse 19, he said that his God shall supply all their needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus

Reasons we Give Back

• Reflection of God's Character

God is presented as the ultimate giver, providing life and blessings. By giving, believers emulate His divine generosity and love.

Emulate: imitate

- **Act of Worship**

Giving is a form of worship and obedience to God, showing trust and devotion

- **Expression of Love**

It is a direct way to show love for God and for one's neighbor, as commanded in the Great Commandments

- **Stewardship**

Believers are stewards of all they have been by God, and giving is a facet of managing these resources for His work.

Stewardship

Is the concept that God owns everything, and humans are merely managers of His Possessions. Christians are called to manage the gifts of God given them, including their time, talents, bodies, money, and the Gospel itself, with wisdom.

Responsibility, and faithfulness to further God's purpose and for His Glory

- **Faith and Trust**

Giving, especially when it is a sacrifice, demonstrates deep trust in God's provision and faithfulness.

- **Selflessness**

True biblical giving is selfless and generous, not seeking personal gain but meeting the needs of others

- **Prioritizing God**

Giving is to be a priority, with believers giving their faith “first fruits” and “best” to honor the Lord

Why the Bible Emphasizes Giving

- **To Honor God**
Sharing what you have to please God
- **To Build the Kingdom**
Generosity fuels the growth of God’s Kingdom through outreach and missions
- **To Spread God’s Love**
It is a powerful way to demonstrate and spread God’s love in the world

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16)

- **To Bless the Giver**
The Bible teaches that “it is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35c), fostering joy, strengthening, faith, and deepening trust in God’s provision, according to the Pastor.

Cross Reference:

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 again.”

- **When you give, it will come back to you running over; men shall give unto unto you. (Luke 6:38)**

Examples and Applications

- **Tithing**
A specific form of giving to put God first and teach reliance on Him.
10 % of one's earnings. (Malachi 3:10)

“Offering”

-Freely given gift including money, to meet needs and support the church

-You can pray and ask God what you should give as an offering and let the spirit lead

- **Acts of Charity**
Giving time, resources, energy to help those in need
- **Stewardships of Talents and Time**
-God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7)

“Honor the Lord with thy substance and with the firstfruits of all thine increase” “So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine” (Proverbs 3:9-10)

Note:

- **The question is often asked: do I have to tithe off of income tax, extra money or checks that I receive?**

Read: Proverbs 3:9 - last 3 words

- **Abraham and Isaac (Genesis 22)**

**Abraham was willing to sacrifice and give God his only Son.
That's how much he loved the Lord**

- **Ruth & Naomi (Ruth 1:16)**
She gave herself to her mother-in-law. She was not selfish

Scriptures on Giving

(2 Kings 4:8-10) Shunamite Woman

-Whenever Elisha passed through Shunenum, she would feed him, she told her husband that she perceived that he was a Holy man of God, and asked him why they don't make him a little chamber, with a bed, table, stool and a candlestick: and whenever he came, he can turn in and lay there.

Note:

- The Shunamite woman gave food and provided a place to sleep for the man of God, her husband also. (giving from the heart, being kind, serving)

(Luke 10:39) Mary & Martha

-Martha had a heart to give and serve Jesus and Mary wanted to sit at His feet and hear His Word.

Other Ways to Give (time)

1. Prayer

Call and pray for those that are sick and shut in and others that cross your mind.

2. Volunteer

Drive church van, clean the church, help the Elderly, visit the nursing home take someone where they need to go

3. Give more to God

We all can do better. He deserves more from us.

Benefits from Giving

- 1. Free's one from the love of money, and becoming more like God through general acts of giving**
- 2. Stewardship, supporting God's Kingdom Work, can lead to blessings, purpose, and a deeper connection with God**

3. **Acknowledge's God's lordship over your life and resources, it also fulfills God command and reflects its generous nature**
4. **Cultivates Faith and Trust**
Regularly giving helps to breath, the fear of lack and fosters trust in God as the ultimate provider
5. **Giving helps the believer become more content with what they have**
6. **Makes you More like God**
By giving you become more like God, who is the ultimate giver.
7. **Fulfills God's Promise**
God promise to pour out blessings on those who are faithful in giving often in the form of spiritual, emotional and physical provision

Giving is one way of showing God how we truly understand that everything we possess comes from Him.

NOTES:

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