

## Galatians 6:7-18

### Verse 7:

--After all that Paul has said about the Spirit and the flesh, he now gives his final exhortation.

--He begins with a warning and a law. He warns that we shouldn't be deceived into thinking that we can mock God by escaping or circumventing the law of sowing and reaping.

--The law of sowing and reaping is a truth so old that you could say it is part of the very soil of creation. It was part of God's promise to Noah once the ark rested.

**\*Genesis 8:22: *While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease.\****

--What is true of a garden is true of a life, a society, and an eternity. No one can change or escape God's law of sowing and reaping.

--Why the warning then? Paul is warning the Galatians that they should not allow the false teachers to deceive them into thinking spiritual blessings will come from sowing bad doctrine or sinful seeds.

--We are all tempted at times to think that we can mock God—turn up our nose at Him—by sowing sin seeds and escaping the sorrows of reaping sin. To imagine that our fleshly works are somehow slipping by just response here on earth. *\*Evil seeds don't transform into good!\**

--Paul warns those believers: ***Do not be deceived! God is not mocked!***

**\*Hosea 8:7: *They sow the wind, and reap the whirlwind. The stalk has no bud; it shall never produce meal. If it should produce, aliens will swallow it up.\****

--God's personal character will be displayed toward every person and action done on earth. God will never be deceived or tricked. Are you trying to hide something from men? Are you trying to manipulate or deceive someone? God knows and all will be made manifest!

**\*Mark 4:22-23: *For there is nothing hidden which will not be revealed, nor has anything been kept secret but that it should come to light. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.\****

--Every seed that is sown will bear a harvest in both the present and the eternal. God does not change the seed or harvest because the person is popular or unpopular, rich or poor, Jew or Gentile, black or white, etc. God does not regard human status or play favorites.

--So we are all sowing a life that is not yet seen. What will be seen when your seeds sprout? We all have a secret life, the only question is: What it will look like when it is no longer secret?

### Verse 8:

--Clearly, this is the sphere that Paul was thinking about. He brings the law of sowing and reaping into his discussion about the Spirit and the flesh.

--All free sons and daughters of God are able to choose between sowing to the Spirit or sowing to the flesh. The world tells us that we are helpless victims of our natural personalities, environments, and feelings—the flesh. The Bible tells us that life in the Spirit is the element that psychologists and counselors don't understand.

--There is a greater life and power working in us so that Paul can say: ***Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.*** . . . or rephrased in the context here: *Sow to the Spirit and you will not reap a harvest from the flesh!*

--How do I know if I am sowing to the Spirit or the flesh?

**\*Romans 8:5: For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.\***

--First, what is your mind on? Second, what are you obeying?

--Now, it is important to understand that God did not institute the law of sowing and reaping as a part of His world to discourage or kill life but to provide and bless life!

--Don't buy into the idea that anyone is getting away with anything whether good or bad. God will be just both ways! *Our sober fear in reaping a bad harvest should be balanced by our hopeful expectation in reaping a good harvest.*

--We are all either sowing to the Spirit or to the flesh. Each will bring forth its particular nature of fruit in both quantity and quality—***corruption*** or ***everlasting life***. \*We get tempted to sow small seeds of sin ignoring the larger harvest and ignoring small seeds of good ignoring the larger harvest!\*

--In some way, our present harvests are preparatory events to our final existence—the pains of hell or the joys of heaven. Passing happiness and godly contentment. Life without God or life with God.

--Ultimately, we will reap an eternal harvest. How have we sown our days? What will be the joyful harvest of a life well-sown? What will be the unthinkable harvest of a life without God?

--Again, let me remind you the seeds that we sow are not immediately evident. They are soon to become evident. Are we sowing an unseen life of good spiritual seeds? God encourages an unseen—or sown—life of spiritual fruit!

**\*Matthew 6:17-18: But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.\***

--This is why Paul encourages a cheerful and liberal heart of sowing!

**\*2 Corinthians 9:6: But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.\***

### **Verses 9:**

--This truth is not simply to cause fear. It is also to spur us on to continue sowing good seed! It is usually harder at first to do what is right but it is always worth it in the end.

--***Well-doing*** is literally doing that which is beautiful. This is the very example of Jesus Christ!

**\*Acts 10:38: How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.\***

--Of course, this wasn't easy for Christ and it will not always be easy for us. Paul knows that we will all be tempted to **grow weary while doing good** and then **lost heart**. \*What difference am I making? They don't listen? Moses & Elijah & Jeremiah as quitters!\*

--Patient endurance is required to sow the entire field of a life with good seed. There is no quick fix here. Sadly some start well but they grow weary and fail to continue.

**\*2 John 8: Look to yourselves that we do not lose those things we worked for, but that we may receive a full reward.\***

--It will help us to remember that all our good works—to actually be good works—are those done for a person and not an ideal. Jesus teaches us through Mary of Bethany that good works are those done for Christ and owned by Him as such—no matter what others think. \*In that context—nothing is too small or too costly!\*

--Paul's encouragement is if we sow to the Spirit we will reap—**In due season**. That is, at the moment that is exactly right for God's purposes and not necessarily our own—though our joy and well-being is a part of God's purposes.

--**Do not lose heart!** You are not alone. Soon, you and I are going to join the company of those that did not give up. We have such a short time to get ready for such a long time!

--One day all the body of Christ will be gathered and we will be with all the servants of God, who sowed good seed through the ages of time: prophets and lawgivers, priests and kings, seers and senators, apostles and martyrs, singers and soldiers, pastors and farmers, evangelists and ushers, those who ran orphanages or hospitals or schools in God's name, confessors and reformers, disciple makers and givers to the poor, godly moms and missionaries, all the faithful men and women who did not lose heart and patiently served God in their day and age.

--Then all the harvest—the whole harvest—will be gathered and the sowing will be over! Don't you understand? There will be a day when all the sowing is over! Do you feel pressure not to sin—good! But you should feel the pressure to love and serve God while you still have the opportunity even more!

--Sow good seed, even if you bring your sheaves weeping, because the harvest is near. I want my portion to spring up to the glory of God on that great day. Do you?! **We shall reap if we do not lose heart!**

**\*Psalm 97:11: Light is sown for the righteous and gladness for the upright in heart.\***

--We need the wisdom of the farmer. Just because you cannot see the seed doesn't mean you don't know where it is. It is sown.

#### **Verse 10:**

--There are endless opportunities to sow good seed. The Greek word for **opportunity** here (*Kairos*) is the same as that of **season** in the last verse. It is the season of sowing good works. The field is wide! The laborers are few! Sow liberally in every season of life God gives you.

\*Anselm (Meditations and Prayers): *“And whatever work I undertake from this point forward, make it tend altogether, by Your grace, through Your grace, and in Your grace to Your praise only. Keep me from this point forward from sin, teach me to be more constant and courageous in good works; and as long as I live in this body, let me show myself in some way Your servant.”\**

--Paul says we should be good to all, but **especially to those who are of the household of faith**. Look, if you don't like the Bride of Christ, or the Body of Christ, or the Family of God, you are not going to like heaven very much! Honestly, you are in the flesh.

### **Verses 11-13:**

--(11) We know that Paul used others to write his letters such as Tertius in **Romans 16:22**, but we don't know exactly why he is speaking about his **large letters**. Guesses are that his writing was obviously not that of a scribe; because of bad eyesight; emphasis; many recipients unable to read; etc. Mostly, it was to emphasize his heart and involvement.

--(12) Here Paul is going to say aloud the two main reasons that the Judaizers wanted to compel the Galatians to be circumcised. First, they wanted to escape the persecution that comes with the message of the cross.

--If they spoke a middle-ground between the sufficiency of the cross and the necessity of circumcision they would escape the shame of the message of the cross.

--Similar to the modern social-justice push which the unsaved and prideful person will love (water, hospitals, schools, feeding the poor, paying down medical debt, etc.). Help him as an equal and he is fine but try to save him as a sinner and now the cross becomes an offense.

--(13) The second reason the Judaizers were trying to compel them to get circumcised was to **boast in your flesh**. The idea was that they wanted to “glory” in a large following of circumcised folks—or more correctly pseudo lawkeepers. \*Similar to how many church leaders boast in yearly baptism numbers, or viewers, or listeners, or followers today!\*

### **Verse 14:**

--In contrast, Paul's boast would be in the sufficiency of the cross—the scandal they were trying to avoid. He was not ashamed of it. In fact, he boasted in it! \*What he reveled in or lived for.\*

**\*Philippians 3:7-8: *But what things were gain to me, these I have counted as loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ.\****

--Then, he speaks of a unique double-crucifixion. He was dead to the world and the world was dead to him by the work of the cross. The **world** being the world system and moral life that put Jesus Christ to death then and still would today.

--This should be true for us as well. The same cross that connects me with God separates me from the world.

-Walk in the Spirit—Crucify the flesh

-Citizen of heaven—Stranger and Pilgrim

-Inside the veil—Outside the camp

-Peace with God—War with the world, the flesh, and the devil

-Glory in—Enemies of the cross

-Aroma of life—Aroma of death

#### **Verse 15:**

--Paul's point is that neither condition—because it is earthly and fleshly—provides any standing with God. It cannot create what only God can—new creation!

--God has made us new creations, He has made a new family of God, He will make a new heavens and new earth.

#### **Verse 16:**

--The **rule** that Paul is referring to here is that of **a new creation** and not the law or circumcision. This is his final shot at those trying to make Christians into pseudo-Jews.

--The discussion here in reference to **the Israel of God** is whether Paul is referring to one group of people as new creations or two groups of people as new creations—Gentiles and Jews or Gentiles plus true Jews in Christ?

--The argument becomes twofold. First, should the Greek word *kai* (the English **and**) be translated *and* (as it most usually is in Scripture) or *even* as it is sometimes? Second, Paul's use of the term **Israel** always refers to the ethnic group. So is he doing something irregular here for emphasis?

--I will just add in here that neither of those options makes the church and Israel into the same thing. That is a large jump to a wrong theological conclusion.

--Either way, the context remains the same. Paul is sticking it to the Judaizers by the making the point that God's peace and mercy can only be known by those walking in the Spirit.

#### **Verse 17:**

--The word Paul uses for **marks** here is *stigmata* (not the weird Catholic version) but a word that was used in secular Greek for the branding on a slave.

--Paul is simply saying they can leave him alone because he has his own marks in the flesh—the authentic Christian marks of persecution that come with the true gospel and life in the Spirit.

\*Valient-for-truth (Pilgrim's Progress): *"I am going to my fathers, and though with great difficulty I am here, yet now I do not regret all the trouble I have been through to arrive where I am. My sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage, and my courage and skill to him that can get it. My marks and scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me that I have fought His battles who now will be my rewarder."*\*

--If we have no scars from fighting His battles, no dents in our helmets, no notches in our swords, no marks on our shields, we will no doubt join the church triumphant in loss and shame.

**Verse 18:**

--Paul begins his last sentence with **brethren**. This is the only time he ends one of his epistles with that word. He uses it ten times in this epistle! They were still his brethren in Christ.

--He also prays that the grace of the Lord would be **with your spirit**. Because he knew that they were troubled in spirit, and would only find peace in God through the grace of God.