

spiritual infant

DISCIPLE ME

THE ONE ABOUT SOWING AND REAPING

READ: THE GREAT PUMPKIN

A Minnesota horticulture teacher set a world record in October 2023 for the heaviest pumpkin after growing a giant jack-o-lantern gourd weighing 2,749 pounds. The pumpkin, which won the 50th World Pumpkin Weigh-Off Championship, had been growing in the teacher's backyard for nearly 30 years. When asked what his secret was, the record-setting horticulturist said, "I take extra care with all my plants, watering them up to 12 times a day and feeding them a bit more than usual." For his efforts, the pumpkin champ won a \$30,000 prize and now holds the world record for the largest pumpkin grown.



STUDY: Galatians 6:7-10

Throughout Jesus' teachings in the New Testament, He uses many agricultural images, pictures, and metaphors to explain the Kingdom of God. These pictures were familiar to His audience, but they may not be as familiar to many of us. Following in Jesus' footsteps, Paul uses the language of a farmer to explain an important principle in God's world.

Read Galatians 6:7-8

In these verses, Paul introduces what we will refer to as the Planting Principle.

- Focusing on verse 7, what is the planting principle? *Hint:* a man _____ what he _____.
- What do you think this principle means?
- In verse 8, Paul unpacks what he means; what is the connection he makes from what is planted (sown) to what is harvested (reaped)?
- Share about a time when you experienced the Planting Principle in your life, a moment when you had to navigate the results of something you had planted.

What Paul is describing in this passage is a Principle in God's world. Principles like gravity or buoyancy are a part of how God designed His world. Principles aren't good or bad things. They just are. Principles are the ways in which the world works. And principles apply to everyone. No matter who you are, no matter what you believe, no matter where you live, and no matter what generation you are a part of, principles apply to everyone for all time.

So, the principle Paul wants the followers of Jesus in Galatia to understand is this: How you live (what you plant) leads to a predictable outcome (what you harvest). In other words, what you plant is what you get. Just like you can't plant corn and harvest bananas, you cannot live a selfish, sinful life and harvest the rewards of righteousness.

Read Galatians 6:9

- What does Paul say we should not do?
- Why might followers of Jesus give up on doing things God's way?
- Earlier in verse 7, we read, *"Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows."* What do you think Paul means when he says God cannot be mocked?

Paul's point is that the Planting principle is a principle. It cannot be broken. You can't fool God, although you might try to fool yourself into believing that your choices can lead to different outcomes. The reason Paul says, *"Let us not become weary in doing good,"* is because of something unique about this principle.

What makes this principle different from other principles like gravity or buoyancy is that the payoff is always **later** and **greater** than we anticipate. Just like growing a giant pumpkin, it might take years to see the results of all your hard work. But just because the results aren't immediate, it doesn't mean the principle doesn't apply. The harvest of our lives is always coming. We always reap what we sow.

Read Galatians 6:10

- Understanding the Planting Principle of reaping and sowing, what do you make of Paul's direction in verse 10?
- What can you do to make sure that you are looking for opportunities to do good and plant seeds of the Spirit instead of seeds of the flesh?

CHALLENGE:

- This week, choose one good habit that you want to develop (praying, exercising, eating better, reading your Bible, etc.). And practice it each day. At your next gathering with your Discipleship Partner(s), discuss the results of your commitment to sow "good seeds".