

God's Law of Sowing and Reaping

by

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Part 3

HE THAT WINNETH SOULS IS WISE - *Proverbs 11:30*

Now we will discuss our approach to the unreached. Unwise criticism can turn them off before they understand what we are talking about. Our attitude means a lot. We need real love and compassion for souls. If you approach some precious soul that has received an experience with God, A real blessing from the Lord, with a question like this: "Have you received the Holy Ghost with speaking in tongues?" They answer, "No." You say, "Well, you're going to hell." YOU HAVE BLINDED THEM! It may take months or perhaps years before they are able to see again. You may have put scales on their eyes so that they may never see the light of God again. Such statements as "You don't have anything" or "You're on your way to hell" or "You're going to split hell wide open" are not biblical, and were not used to bring light and truth to souls were hungry for God. Such expressions show a lack of love and compassion for the lost. They also turn people off so that they are not interested in anything else you may have to tell them. They need someone to love them, someone to understand them, someone to gently and carefully lead them as a shepherd leads his sheep. We need to cry to God until our hearts are melted and saturated with meekness, understanding that none of us would be saved by our own righteousness, but only by God's abundant mercy. He that winneth souls is wise. MAY GOD GIVE US THIS WISDOM!

I believe that there is another fault among us that we need to give careful attention and prayer to, and I want you to know that I have no desire to compromise truth. I believe in proclaiming this wonderful experience of Acts 2:38. It is absolutely essential. It's necessary; we MUST preach it! It is the message for our time! But there's a lot of other things that we must not forget. Many souls may not be ready for Acts 2:38. It was only after the Jews were convicted of their sins, and realized that they had crucified the Lord, and they cried out and said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" that they got the answer of Acts 2:38. First there must be conviction for sin and then the remedy. The growth of the Word of God in the human heart covers a vast area. Let us take particular notice of the very important teaching of our Lord Jesus as recorded in Mark 4:26-28. "SO IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, HE KNOWETH NOT HOW, For the earth bringeth forth fruit of itself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

Yes, you planted to get the full corn in the ear. You were anxious for it to come to maturity. But, there's a lot that has to do with growth, and if you disregard the stalk, you will never have any corn! If you disregard the blade of wheat, you'll never have a harvest of wheat! I think we need to appreciate the stages of growth just like the farmer does. He sows his wheat in the fall of the year, it just gets a good start, it looks like a green carpet, and then the winter cold and snows appear to kill it. But wait: The warm sunshine and spring rains turn the fields to green again! There will finally come the harvest, about midsummer. But the farmer had to have faith to wait. If you did not understand the processes of growth, and had been invited to view the green carpet of wheat in the spring, with surprise you might have exclaimed, "I don't see any wheat; I don't see anything but grass. There is nothing here to harvest." No, it's true, there is nothing there to harvest. But there is something there which will produce a harvest!

And if you say, "I want corn, but I don't want any stalks," well, you will never have any corn that way. There is first a tiny sprout which will grow into a tall stalk, but it will be many days until **THE FULL CORN IN THE EAR**. The average corn crop will take from 80 to 110 days to reach full maturity. But the blade and the stalk are absolutely essential to the harvest, and you had better take care of it! For if you cut it down **YOU WILL NEVER HAVE A CROP TO HARVEST!**

So Brethren, let us learn to appreciate growth, the growth that brings forth the fruit. There are some men who will say, "Well, if you are not baptized in Jesus' name, if you don't have the Holy Ghost, you're no good. You don't have anything. We will cut this down." This possibly be the stalk that is going to bear the ear? Lord, help us to have spiritual understanding. We need to appreciate everything that anyone has received from God. No one has anything from God that they need to throw away. They don't have enough of God. We need to pray that they will receive **MORE OF GOD!**

We need to learn the lesson which is recorded in the 18th chapter of the book of Acts. When Aquila and Priscilla heard Apollos, they took him aside, and expounded unto him **THE WAY OF GOD MORE PERFECTLY**. When God sent the angel to Cornelius, he did not say that he had nothing, but rather that his prayers and alms had been acknowledged, and he was now come to direct him into the fullness of truth.

I AM SURE that God had something to do with Martin Luther, that God had something to do with John Wesley, that God had something to do with John Knox, God had something to do with Charles Finney, God had something to do with D.L. Moody, and that God had something to do with many other men, even with men in our day who have caused many to seek after the Lord. They may not be bringing the fruit to maturity, but the seed of life is beginning to grow. May God help us to **SHINE THE LIGHT ON THEIR PATHWAY** until they produce a harvest! Brethren, let us never get this idea, "Well, there is no ear here, there is no wheat here, all that I can see is the blade, all that I

see is the stem. Why should we let it stand?”

A few years ago, when my grandson was visiting with us here in New York, I asked him to help me clean up my garden. Since I had an errand to run, I suggested that he start cleaning up the corn which was about knee high, as that would be less tedious than trying to clean up the smaller plants. When I returned a little later to see how he was doing, I was shocked. I had foot high squash planted in between the corn, and they were so nice, about ready to bloom. All my squash were laying wilted on the ground. He had pulled them all up because he thought they were weeds. I was sure that he knew squash plants from weeds. Since it was too late to replant, we had no squash that year. This was not so tragic as we can buy more squash – BUT WHAT IF THESE HAD BEEN SOULS?

“WHAT IS THE CHAFF TO THE WHEAT?”

The real reason for planting wheat is to get more wheat. But when you plant wheat, it is not a head of wheat that first comes up out of the ground. When you plant a grain of corn, it is not an ear of corn that first appears from the ground. When you plant wheat, the first phase of growth will look like a blade of grass. When you plant corn, there first comes up a little tender stem, which looks nothing like the grain you planted. But if you have understanding and patience there will eventually be the harvest. Then you will reap the precious grain. You will put the wheat in the garner, you will leave the stubble and the straw in the field. But THE STUBBLE AND THE STRAW WERE ESSENTIAL. It was a part of growth, and you would not have had a harvest without it. WHAT IS THE CHAFF TO THE WHEAT??? Should we not stop and consider?

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

I believe that there are lessons relative to spiritual growth that we have not understood as yet. I wonder how it will all appear when we look back, after we have finished our course. I thank God a thousand times for leading us on from the Methodist church. But again I thank God for what this church meant to my family when I was a small boy. They had something that started us in the right direction. I think we need more appreciation and respect for others who are walking faithfully in all the light they know. Yes, we must take a firm stand against sin, and never compromise with the world, but let us never develop a selfish pride and disregard everything that others have done for the lost.

WE NEED AN APPRECIATION FOR OTHERS

Let us consider the work of god in Assam, that northern India province that has been so fruitful, where a great bulk of our Indian believers are located: When our missionaries

first went to that area several years ago with this wonderful message of truth, they found about 50,000 devout believers in Christ, who had been converted from heathenism, as a result of many devout Presbyterian missionaries who had gone there many years ago. Many of these believers had already received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. They were hungry for the whole truth and gladly accepted the message brought by our missionaries. As a result, we have about 30,000 believers in that province of India today. They are baptized in Jesus' name. They have the baptism of the Holy Ghost. But how many believers would we have there if the Presbyterians had not first been there??

MAY GOD DELIVER US FROM SPIRITUAL PRIDE

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.” Ephesians 2:8, 9. Some of us have developed a pride of religion. Thank God for baptism in Jesus' Name! It's right, its biblical. It is the only proper baptism for today! Thank God for the baptism of the Holy Ghost with speaking in tongues! We believe that it is necessary to make us ready for the rapture of the church. But, we also thank God for everything that has led us to this truth. Consider most of the people who come to our churches, and have now been baptized in water and the Spirit. We didn't have to take their Buddhist god from them. No, somebody else did that. Someone else gave them a measure of truth. Think of yourself: Most of you knew something about God before you heard about baptism in Jesus' name, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. So we need to appreciate everything that God has done all down through the years. That is why Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven is like a small seed which grows to become a great tree, until the fowls of the air lodge in its branches. The kingdom of heaven has done this. The kingdom of heaven takes in the whole scope of what we call Christianity, beginning with those who start to receive truth, until they become a mature child of God. It has grown into a great tree, and not everything in it is good. There are many fowls of the air and a lot of hypocrites here. Many unrighteous things have lodged in this natural, physical kingdom which is spread over the earth today. But God is going to take a Church out of it. HE IS GOING TO TAKE A CHURCH FOR HIS NAME! So there is a growth which you and I had nothing to do with. We need to humbly thank God for allowing us to obtain his truth.

THE GREAT POTENTIAL OF SOWING AND REAPING

Many look at the extreme vastness of the world's population, and then to the insignificance of the few who would sow and reap, and they become overwhelmed with the task, and are ready to say, “What is the use? There is no use to try – It's hopeless! The world can never be reached.” But they underestimate the potential and magnitude of reproduction. First of all, we must realize that it is God's work, and that we are laborers with Him. HE IS WELL ABLE to accomplish His plan and purpose. LET US NOT FAIL TO DO OUR PART!

Let's take a look at the potential increase of some of God's creation. Take a fish for example. One fish may spawn from 10,000 to 25,000 eggs in a single year. Just a few fish can fill a very large lake with fish in about 5 to 10 years.

Now let us consider a single grain of corn. How long would it take for that single grain to fill the world with corn? Corn has the potential, if properly planted, to reproduce itself a thousand times in one year. One grain is able to produce an ear of perhaps 1,000 grains. I have personally seen many ears of corn on which there were 1,000 grains. Now let us look at the potential:

1 year1,000 grains
2 years.....1,000 ears or 10 bushels
(10 bushels would plant 50 acres)
3 years.....50,000 acres
4 years.....50,000,000 acres
5 years.....50,000,000,000 acres
6 years.....50,000,000,000,000 acres
(ENOUGH TO PLANT THE WHOLE WORLD!)

NOW LET US CONSIDER OUR POTENTIAL FOR SOUL WINNING

If every real believer in the world would win ONE SOUL each year, who in turn would win ONE SOUL each year, and would continue this rate of increase each year, WE COULD WIN THE WHOLE WORLD IN JUST 35 YEARS! But we do not have to start with one believer. There must be at least 500,000 believers in the world NOW. With 500,000 who would win one soul each year at the above rate, WE COULD REACH THE WHOLE WORLD IN 14 YEARS! Such an increase of souls is not impossible! The Church which started at Pentecost with 120 Holy Ghost-filled disciples multiplied into a vast host within a very few years, until ALL THE WORLD in that day had heard this glorious truth! GOD IS WELL ABLE TO DO IT AGAIN!

FRUIT BEARING TREES

Our fruit bearing must be like a tree, not like a stalk of corn. The stalk of corn bears for one season; but the fruit tree bears fruit year after year. God also likened us to the grapevine. We are the Lord's vineyard. (Isaiah 5:1-7; John 15)

HE EXPECTS US TO BEAR FRUIT

Every branch that beareth FRUIT is purged or pruned that it may bring forth MORE FRUIT. If we abide in Him we will bear MUCH FRUIT. If we do not bear fruit, we will be cut off and cast away.

**“CAST THY BREAD UPON THE WATERS for thou shalt find it AFTER MANY DAYS.
(Ecclesiastes 11:1)**

It often seems so very long between the time of sowing and the time of reaping. Often we grow weary and sometimes faint and think that our reward will never come. But God's unfailing promise is: **“THOU SHALT FIND IT AFTER MANY DAYS.”** We have experienced many incidents like this in our life and ministry through the years. Sacrifices and efforts which seemed to be lost have, after many years of waiting, and committing the results to God, been so richly rewarded, over and over again.

“GOD IS FAITHFUL THAT PROMISED”

Now, let us look at Ecclesiastes 11 verse 4:

“HE THAT OBSERVETH THE WIND SHALL NOT SOW AND HE THAT OBSERVETH THE CLOUDS SHALL NOT REAP.”

Brethren, let us consider what is represented here by the wind. A man who is going to sow the natural seed, may look at the sky and say, “Well, it's windy, and it's cloudy, and it looks like it is going to rain. I don't think I'll sow any seed today.” And so he waits for better weather. But when it comes to the spiritual sowing, Brethren, we must disregard all the signs.

WE MUST DISREGARD THE OBSTACLES

It doesn't make any difference if there are winds of doctrine, if there are false creeds, if the conditions look adverse: **WE MUST SOW THE GOSPEL SEED!**

Someone has said, “Well, there is no use to waste my time, there is no use to sow any seed in this place. But someday when I get a good chance... Oh, **SOMEDAY**, I'm going to do great things for God!” And I have seen some dreamers who just dreamed for years, who never did find the right conditions, Who never really did to get into the business of sowing the Gospel Seed. We've got to be determined, Brethren; we have an obligation to God and to this perishing world.

THE SEED MUST BE SOWN!

God has allowed it to be sown in our hearts and we are thankful that it has brought forth fruit. If we are thankful, **REALLY THANKFUL**, then we will see that the seed is sown in other hearts. **THANK GOD!**

He that regardeth the clouds shall not reap. Verse six says, “In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand; For thou knoweth not whether shall prosper,

either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.” We cannot know which will fall upon good ground and grow, but we know that some of the seed WILL GROW! PRAISE GOD for such a glorious promise!

IT IS IMPORTANT HOW WE SOW

One bushel of corn when properly planted may produce 1,000 bushels of corn. But if you plant the bushel of corn in your small backyard, you won't get enough for one mess of roasting ears, because you didn't give it room to grow. Likewise, if you plant all the precious Gospel Seed in your own backyard (to your own household), you want to reap enough to feed anybody. But, if you'll have enough ambition to break up ten acres of land, and prepare the ground, and sow that same seed and keep out the weeds, you have a growth potential of 1000 bushels of corn. You see, it depends on how you sow the seed and where you sow it. So don't plant it all in one hill! That method will never work. There will be so many stalks of corn they're there won't be strength enough in the ground to feed them, and so it will all grow up in one cluster like a bunch of grass, and then it will die, and you won't reap a single ear, NOT A SINGLE EAR! So let us learn how to sow the Seed and be confident that the Seed will grow. You don't plant the seed and then say, “I am going to sit here and see if it grows.” It may be many days and nights before you even see it. What are you supposed to do? Break up the ground, sow the seed and have faith in God. Have faith that the earth will produce when the seed is properly sown. The Seed will grow because it is GOOD SEED. Sow the Seed and go on to another soul. Come back often enough to keep the weeds out. You cannot make the seed grow. The Lord will see that it grows. IT WILL GROW!

NEVER GIVE UP

If I have had any measure of success through the years, I believe that it is mostly due to my persistence; maybe the “bulldog attitude” of NEVER GIVE UP, NEVER GIVE UP! Never stop because it MUST GROW; IT SHALL GROW. You've got the promise that it will grow. THERE WILL BE A HARVEST! If you sow in tears, YOU SHALL REAP IN JOY! You don't have to make it grow. It is God who sends the sunshine and the rain. It is the Lord that sends the blessing upon it. It is written, “GOD GIVETH THE INCREASE.” So you sow and you sleep and rise night and day. Oh yes, keep on weeping, keep on praying, keep on sowing, HALLELUJAH! And the Seed will SPRING UP AND GROW HE KNOWETH NOT HOW. Now you need to take good care of it and keep the weeds out: KEEP THE WEEDS OUT! The word of God will teach you how to do this. You really have nothing to do with its growth. We can't make it grow. God will see that it grows. IT WILL GROW!

KEEP ON SOWING SEED

Now while you are waiting for it to grow, keep on sowing seed. Keep on sowing, keep at it, don't stop, don't ever stop. You may say, "I've sown so long. I've sown so many acres and I haven't reaped a crop." KEEP ON SOWING! While you are waiting for the first acre to bear, sow another acre, sow another acre, and another acre, and another block, and another block, and KEEP ON GOING. Witness to another house, to another family, try somebody else. Just keep on, keep on, KEEP ON! Someday, after you have forgotten that you sowed some seed over here, you'll find that it will bring forth fruit.

SOME PRECIOUS SOUL WILL COME TO GOD

You may say, "Well, I'm surprised to see YOU. What caused you to come?" Answer - "You left a tract at my door long ago." "But why didn't you come sooner?" Answer - "I wasn't ready then."

Well, the ground wasn't in shape. The condition was not right. God had to do a work on His own.

I think we will be amazed When we come to the end of life's journey, to the Judgment of Almighty God, to find out what our efforts to reach the lost DID do, and what the seed-sowing DID accomplish. I think for the most part that we are unaware of all that is being accomplished now. We cannot measure its scope. Brethren, there is another thing that I would like to say to you: Don't always try to claim for yourself every soul that receives the Holy Ghost in your services. It may have been the result of someone else's labors. "ONE SOWETH, ANOTHER WATERETH, BUT GOD GIVETH THE INCREASE." Isn't that what the Apostle Paul said? We ought not to be so concerned whether it is mine or thine, JUST SO IT IS THE LORD'S. HALLELUJAH! It is HIS heritage, so let us not be lords over God's heritage. It is HIS CROP. "HE WILL GATHER THE WHEAT INTO THE GARNER."

(Comment by Brother C.) "Brother Hanby, I have felt this way about it, and it just ties right into this. Regardless of where an individual is that you are trying to get through to God, we want them to get the Holy Ghost, whether they are in my church, or yours."

(Brother Hanby) "That's right. It's a soul for the KINGDOM. God will know who deserves the credit. He will know who was SHEAF it is."

(Brother P.) "Is it possible that we don't get much results, sometimes, because we're really don't believe God? We knock on a door and begin to witness to them, but we don't expect God to do something for them. Because we don't see any immediate results, we conclude... that nobody wants to hear the Word. That sounds to me like a lack of faith, and we can't do anything without faith, can we?"

(Brother Hanby) "Well, faith is very important; we won't go very far without it. But do you know, that a thief can steal a bushel of corn and plant it, and it will still grow?"

(laughter)

The question has arisen over the years: “Well, how in the world can that man’s work be blessed, when I know that he has failed God? He has been accused of terrible things, even of adultery. How can his work be blessed?” Well, maybe he has repented and God has forgiven him, and perhaps he didn’t. But the fact that there is corn growing in his field does not mean that it was a godly man who planted it. A thief can steal your potatoes and plant them, and they will grow, **BECAUSE THERE IS LIFE IN THE SEED**. Paul said, “Some preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of goodwill: The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely... But the other of love ... What then? Notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense, or in truth, **CHRIST IS PREACHED**, And I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.” (Philippians 1:15-18) That is the thing that counts. **GOD BE THANKED – CHRIST IS PREACHED!**

THE WORD OF GOD WILL GROW

The word of God, properly sown, **WILL GROW**. Of course, we must remember that some things are necessary; we can’t all be thieves and have a crop. Somewhere, there must come the tears of compassion. Somewhere, there must also be the travail. There must be the weeping for the lost. There must be the prevailing prayer. You will never sow much of the Seed unless you get a vision of the lost and a compassion that will prevail over all your own desires. Weeping – compassion – prevailing prayer, have their place in saving souls, just the same as travail (i.e., labor) has its place in the birth of a child. **THESE THINGS WILL WORK!**

IS THE SEED YET IN THE BARN?

What a sobering question did Haggai, the prophet of God, ask us in chapter 2:19. We may have lots of seed, but it cannot grow until it is planted in the earth. So the word of God must be planted in the hearts of men or it will never bring forth life. Souls will perish unless we give them the Living Word! Will the Lord come again and find us with the Word of Life **STILL IN THE BARN?** Will souls be lost because of our neglect?

HE IS THE LORD OF THE HARVEST

But let us never forget the lesson of the unconscious growth. If God didn’t make the seed grow, there is nothing that we could do to make it grow. **HE IS THE LORD OF THE HARVEST!** We are laborers together with Him... not **FOR HIM**, but **WITH HIM**. There is a lot of difference between working **FOR** someone, and working **WITH** someone. **GOD MUST WORK WITH US OR WE WILL NEVER HAVE A HARVEST OF SOULS**. Another thing we must remember when we win these souls, is that we are not playing with marbles. We are dealing with eternity-bound souls. We can’t shove and kick them around, and throw them in and out as though they belong to us. **THEY ARE REALLY GOD’S PROPERTY**. They are God’s children, precious children. They are eternity-bound souls. God has purchased them with His own blood. They need love.

They need kindness. They need understanding. They need tenderness. They need nourishment. Remember that Jesus said, “FEED MY LAMBS, FEED MY SHEEP!”

Let us pray for grace and wisdom to guide these souls. Let us not boast, as we have heard some do, about how many they have kicked out. But let us endeavor to present them faultless before the Lord at His soon coming. We won't be able to keep them all; some will never stand the testing. But let us ask God to help us, so that they will not be lost because of our failures. When we have children born into the family, they need some fatherly and motherly care. If the children don't get that care, they cannot make it. Let us pray that God will enable us to also care for the spiritual children. This is a very, very important matter. I think we have pretty well covered this subject, at least enough of it to stir us to action.

I don't know how much you have enjoyed this study, or what it has meant to you, but I hope and pray that it is done all of you a lot of lasting good. It seems to me to be extremely vital, and I want to thank the one who suggested that we teach on this subject. I think, in coming to a close tonight, that we should stand and earnestly pray that God will help us to put these lessons into practice.

Note: My dear friend, would you truly like to be a winner of precious souls for the Kingdom of God? YOU CAN BE A WINNER OF SOULS if you will let God direct your life. SEEK THE LORD NOW – AS NEVER BEFORE, and don't stop until you know THE JOY OF SOUL WINNING!

SPEAK MY LORD

Millions now in sin and shame are dying;
Listen to their sad and bitter cry.
Hasten, Brother, Hasten to the rescue.
Quickly answer, “Master, here am I.”

Speak my Lord, Speak my Lord.
SPEAK and I'll be quick to answer Thee.
Speak my Lord, Speak my Lord!
Speak and I will answer, “LORD SEND ME!”

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