

## “He That Soweth Sparingly ...”

“But this I say, He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall also reap bountifully. Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart: not grudgingly nor of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver” (2 Cor. 9:6-7).

Many are the varied points that could be made from seed and are made by inspired writers and even the Lord Himself. Jesus said, “Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit” (Jn. 12:24). In that passage our Lord showed that so long as a seed did not die, it would never reproduce itself nor multiply; but when a single grain falls into the earth and dies, the process of germination begins and hundreds of grains of wheat result from that one, single seed. Jesus showed that without his sacrificial death, none could be saved and become “children of God”.

There is another significant point to be made about seed. The principle was set in motion from the beginning: “Every seed reproduces after its own kind.” We understand, without even thinking about it, that when a cow gives birth to an offspring, that offspring will be a cow; when a mare has an offspring, that offspring will be a horse. We may ponder whether the unborn child will be a boy or girl, but never, ever think about whether it will be human or not — we know it will be. And we know that Jesus said, “The parable is this, the seed is the word of God” (Lk. 8:11). Just as it is impossible to plant tomato seed and from it produce stalks of cotton, okra, and squash; so it is impossible to plant God's word and get Christians, Muslims, Catholics, etc. The seed produces after its own kind. Paul wrote, “Be not deceived, God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap ...” (Gal. 6:7).

Taking that principle a step further Paul continued: “For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption: but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life” (Gal. 6:8). We cannot live an ungodly life and hope to gain heaven. If we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption.

Both these illustrations are proper applications from thoughts about seed, but neither was Paul's intended point in 2 Corinthians 9. There he was emphasizing the fact that a man who sows just a few seed is going to have a sparse harvest — to have a bountiful harvest, man must sow bountifully. Malachi challenged his nation to be generous in their offerings to God, urging them to bring the full portion required by the Lord. He wrote, “Bring ye the whole tithe into the store house, that there may be food in my house and prove me now herewith, saith Jehovah of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it” (Mal. 3:10). Prove the Lord and see that His promises are true!

Giving is to be according to purpose. Just as we purpose to pay the house or car note, so we purpose what we will give to the Lord. And when we have so purposed, we give

what we purposed; we do not give grudgingly, nor of necessity, we give cheerfully, fully confident that as God has blessed us in times past, so will He bless us again and again.

The gifts we give to God, no matter whether small or large, can never begin to equal the gifts that our Heavenly Father bestows on us. His gifts fall into many varied forms: health, friends, and answered prayers. May we never begrudge our gifts to Christ! He has been so rich and generous to us, how could we begrudge our gifts to Him?

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