

THE LAWS OF BIBLICAL PROSPERITY

(Chapter Fourteen)

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Chapter Fourteen – The Process of Reaping

In previous chapters we have discussed that one of the basic biblical principles interacting with biblical prosperity is the *Law of Sowing and Reaping*. The truth is the entire Kingdom of God and everything going on within it is subject to this eternal principle and there are numerous scriptures that talk about it. The Christian desiring biblical prosperity then must understand and practice Spirit-led sowing and reaping.

The Bible says that if we sow bountifully we will reap bountifully (2 Corinthians 9:6), In fact, God wants to open the windows of Heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows (Malachi 3:10). But many Believers have sown the seeds of their tithes and offerings and are frustrated that their harvests have not manifested according to their expectations. Is the Word in error about this or could it be that many of us don't know how to go about reaping the harvest? Are we even sure we would be able to recognize a harvest if we came upon it? Today's article is about the process of reaping.

The Parable of the Seed

In order to understand the biblical principles that are associated with reaping a harvest, a good place to start is the Book of Mark, Chapter 4, verses 26-29:

"...The kingdom of God is like a man who casts seed upon the soil (26); and he goes to bed at night and gets up by day, and the seed sprouts and grows – how, he himself does not know (27). The soil produces crops by itself; first the blade, then the head, then the mature grain in the head (28). But when the crop permits, he immediately puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come (29)."

These verses lead us to several important biblical principles that are specifically concerned with reaping in the Kingdom of God:

- Sufficient seed must be cast upon the soil. If no seed has been planted, there can be no harvest. If the amount of seed sown is meager, the harvest will be sparse.
- At the beginning of the process the man has the responsibility of sowing the seed and God is responsible for multiplying it back to him through the soil.
- After the seed has been sown, the sower enters a time of rest. During that time, the sown seed multiplies on its own without any help from the sower.
- As the plants grow and begin to be revealed they come up as sprouts and go through a maturing process until they are ready for the harvest. The sower must resist the temptation to harvest the plants before they are mature, i.e. before they are ready. If he reaps too early the harvest will be sparse and there will be no mature seed for planting the next crop.
- When the crop is finally ready, it is the man's responsibility to put in the sickle and bring in the harvest. He must end the time of rest and go to work again in order for the harvest to be manifested. If he waits too long, the plants will start to die and the harvest will decline. There is a perfect time or season for harvesting, a window of opportunity that the reaper must recognize and take advantage of.

Summary of the Reaping Process

The truth is many Believers today aren't reaping the harvest God intends for them to have, i.e. they're not receiving His best, because they don't know enough about reaping. Maybe they try to harvest too soon or they go out in the flesh to make their own harvest. Or they don't rest when they should so they're too tired when the harvest is ready. Or they don't realize they're supposed to participate in the work of bringing in the harvest. Or they're just too lazy. How many Christians are sitting and waiting passively for their bank accounts to fill up while the harvest is all around them waiting for the sickle to be put in, for action to be taken?

The only place to find out how to reap God's blessing is in His Word. Therefore, becoming an expert in the process of reaping requires committed study of the Word. As we acquire knowledge, we apply what we've learned until we become proficient. God wants us to reap but we have to learn to do it His way; He will not work with us to do it our way. And so, based on the principles we have seen in the *Parable of the Seed* and from previous chapters in this publication, we can assemble a basic process for biblical reaping that does it His way:

1. In order to expect the principles of sowing and reaping to work on your behalf, you must start out by walking in love. It is the essential requirement (Matthew 22:40). The problem is your flesh doesn't want to walk in love; it prefers to be selfish and competitive. To overcome this you must begin to confess with your mouth what the Word says instead of what your flesh and the world are telling you. Declare to God by speaking out loud that you love Him with all your heart, mind, soul and strength. Declare that you love your fellow man, including your enemies, just as you love yourself and then thank the Lord for giving you the ability to love as He does. Look for opportunities to bless others. Keep on confessing and blessing from your love every day and soon love will take over your life and open the door to all of God's promises.
2. Then you will need to sow seeds; the essence of love is sowing. That is, you must give something into the Kingdom of God that is valuable to you out of the substance God has provided. If you're short of seed to sow, find anything that you can give away in faith and start out small. God will multiply the seed back to you so you can sow more the next time. You can expect and believe that your eventual harvest will be at least a 100-fold multiplication of what you sow into the Kingdom. Remember, if you sow bountifully, you can expect to reap bountifully (2 Corinthians 9:8).
3. As you sow your seed, ask God to multiply it back to you. Release your faith on the biblical principle that you can have what you ask for if you don't doubt in your heart; just believe and you can have what you say (Mark 11:23-24).
4. Now it's time to rest and wait for the harvest to grow and multiply. You have done the sowing and God will do the multiplying. He doesn't need your help so resist the temptation to go out in your own strength and start bringing in a flesh-harvest on your own. God's harvest will be greater and much more rewarding than anything your flesh can do. Rest and wait while you stand on the promises God has spoken. Stay in close contact with the Holy Spirit and begin to confess with your mouth that you already have the multiplied harvest you have asked the Lord for. And while you wait, remain totally content with where God has you believing that your harvest will manifest at the perfect time.
5. Soon you start to see the first spouts of the plants that will bring your harvest. Keep the weeds (the cares of the world) away so they don't choke your sprouts. Casting your concerns on the Lord is a part of resting. Be watchful as your plants grow into maturity but rest in the peace that passes all understanding.

6. Soon enough the plants will grow to full size: first the blade, next the head and then the seed upon the head. Resist the temptation to harvest grain (seed) that is not fully mature, that is not ready. The wise sower must recognize the correct season to enter into the harvest and the way to know this is to stay in close contact with the Holy Spirit. He knows the exact moment to begin the harvest and He knows where you should take the next step. He will lead you into the harvest at the opportune moment and in the right place.
7. At the right time you will need to put in the sickle and bring the harvest in yourself. This is your time to go back to work because it's the sower's responsibility to also make the harvest. Many Believers don't realize this and are waiting for their harvest to drop down on them supernaturally. But the Word says the sower must bring in the harvest. Some of us have a harvest all around us but we don't see it or we're not willing to make the effort to take advantage of the opportunities the Lord has provided. Find out from the Holy Spirit where to put in the sickle and then go to work where He shows you.
8. Be sure to set aside seed for the next harvest. Many Believers don't have enough seed for the next harvest because they have consumed it on their own agenda. Within every harvest there is a portion that is seed to be set aside for sowing in the future; God always provides the seed for the sower (2 Corinthians 9:10) and He will tell you specifically how much to set aside. Just ask Him. Here's an example of what He has told others to do that you might want to consider: sow 10% as a tithe (refer to Chapter 13) and simultaneously set aside another 10% for seed for the next sowing season to be given as God directs. Be sure and set aside the seed before you start disbursing the remaining 80% for your living expenses. As time goes on, the Lord will multiply your harvests and you will find yourself able to live on a smaller and smaller percentage of your total provision even though you are sowing greater and greater amounts. This is how we become distributors of God's provision: by blessing others and by helping Him build His Kingdom.

Conclusions

The flesh doesn't want you to get into this process but *Love* does and God is Love (1 John 4:16). And the principal manifestation of one's love for another is giving which is sowing. If you will give into the work of the Kingdom of God as the Holy Spirit directs, He will see to it that your gifts, your sowing, are multiplied back to you. The very essence of God is giving: He gave you Jesus and He gave you new life. He has also given you a process in His Word that leads to the fulfillment of all His promises.

If you want to see the fullness of His prosperity in your life with nothing missing and nothing broken, you must learn to be an effective sower, a giver after the image of Christ who was willing to give His life on your behalf. ***But you must also learn to be an effective reaper.*** God will provide the multiplied harvests but you must take care of the reaping and know how to do it with efficiency and wisdom.

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BIBLE STUDY

Lesson Fourteen – The Process of Reaping

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2. Men are responsible for _____ the seed and God is responsible for _____ it back to us through the soil.
3. In order to expect the principles of sowing and reaping to work on your behalf, you must start out by walking in _____.
4. In order to reap a harvest, sufficient _____ must be cast upon the soil. If no _____ is planted, there can be no harvest.
5. While we are waiting for the seed we have sown to mature, it is essential that we _____ and cast our cares upon the Lord.
6. The person who has sown seed must resist the temptation to harvest the plants before they have _____.
7. When the crop is finally ready for the harvest, it is the responsibility of people to put in the _____ and bring it in.
8. Some Believers have a _____ all around them but don't see it or don't realize they must make the effort to bring it in.
9. From every harvest we must set aside _____ for the next harvest instead of consuming it all on our own agenda.
10. If you want to see the fullness of God's prosperity in your life, you must learn to be both an effective sower and an effective _____.

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