

## YOU WILL REAP WHAT YOU SOW

### *Note to the speaker:*

Show in practical terms what it means to 'sow with a view to the flesh' as well as how to 'sow with a view to the spirit.' Make clear that in either case the outcome is inevitable: We will reap what we sow, even though it may not appear that way initially. Encourage all to 'sow with a view to the spirit,' with everlasting life in view (Ga 6:8)

### **WILL YOU BE HAPPY TO REAP WHAT YOU SOW?** (5 min.)

Living things on earth reproduce after their kind (Ge 1:11, 12, 24, 25)

Have you not seen this with animals and plants?

Farmers depend on this; when sow wheat seed, not expect rice crop

This is also true of human life (Read Galatians 6:7, 8; *g76* 4/8 3-4)

You have no doubt seen effects of both good habits and bad ones on people's lives (Ec 11:9; *w86* 8/1 16-17)

Do you fully believe that you will reap what you are now sowing? Do you reflect this belief in family life, recreation, attitude toward study and field service, conduct in congregation?

Outcome can be either "everlasting life" from God or "corruption" (*w88* 6/15 19-20)

### **CIRCUMSTANCES RELATING TO PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS** (6 min.)

Letter was to real people just like us

Galatians were our brothers, having families, jobs, problems, needs, just as we do; counsel for them can help us

Paul visited there and helped establish congregations in province, so he had genuine love for them (*it-1* 880-2; *si* 217-20; Ac, chaps. 13, 14, 16)

What prompted Paul to write his letter? (*it-1* 882)

He learned that Judaizers were causing problems

The native Galatians tended to be fickle and unsteady, and populace had low moral standards

Purpose of Paul's letter was twofold: to encourage the Galatians to break free from slavery to the Law and to remind them not to go to the other extreme and break free from all restraint (*w82* 11/15 28-30)

His counsel showed that either of the two extremes would be 'sowing with a view to the flesh' and would lead to 'corruption from the flesh'

He encouraged them instead to 'sow with a view to the spirit' because "whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap"

Though living at a different time, do we see value of Paul's counsel for us?

### **USING, BUT NOT ABUSING, CHRISTIAN FREEDOM** (15 min.)

(In developing the remainder of the talk, adapt to needs of congregation. Include practical examples to make points live. For additional information, see *w69* 350-1; *w68* 521-32)

Circumcision and Law not problem now, but what about human "laws"?

Some in the congregation may tend to become extreme in their views on grooming, diet, medical treatment, conduct toward relatives, music, recreation (*w82* 6/15 24; *w82* 7/15 19-20)

May pressure others to follow; act as if any having different view are not mature

This tendency needs to be guarded against, as it is 'sowing with a view to the flesh'

Abusing our freedom in Christ is also 'sowing with a view to the flesh' (Ga 5:13; *it-1* 872; *it-2* 1014; *g79* 6/8 27-8)

Like Galatians, we are surrounded by people of low morals and unrestrained conduct

World likes entertainment that promotes violence, lack of restraint, flirting, casual view of marriage, excessive drinking, abusive speech and action, and so on

Do you allow lawless, independent, selfish thinking of world to infect you? (*w84* 11/15 28-31; *w83* 1/15 7-10; *w83* 10/15 10-15)

Have you thought, "There are no 'rules,' so I can do what *I* want"?

Easy to get that view of recreation, music, conduct, grooming

How seriously do you view marriage vow?

Need to regulate thinking and conduct by love (Ga 5:14, 15, 26)

Ignoring law of love leads to treating others on *fleshly* basis, resulting in hatred and contentions

Do you bear grudges, feed anger? (*w69* 351; *w68* 530)

Do you feel that you are without law, or are you governed by law of love? (Jas 2:8)

To avoid perils of abusing freedom, sow with a view to the spirit

Faith, love, and holy spirit are aids in sowing with a view to the spirit

We need a faith that touches our heart and affects our daily life (Ga 5:6)

Need to keep seeking spirit, responding to its ways and leadings

If in doubt, ask: 'Is this what spirit would lead me to do?'

Might be quite different from own preferences as fleshly man

Sowing with a view to the spirit and properly exercising Christian freedom result in blessings

“Works of the flesh” do not bring lasting happiness or God’s approval (Read Galatians 5:19-21)

With “fruitage of the spirit” filling our life, our entire way will be different (Read Galatians 5:22-25)

If adjustments are needed, we should strive to make them

Is a matter between you and God, but all of us need to be honest with ourselves, realizing that Galatians 6:7, 8 will be fulfilled

**SOW WITH VIEW TO THE SPIRIT BY PUTTING LOVE FOR OTHERS INTO ACTION (12 min.)**

Love should be a real force in our life, not just a pleasant, abstract idea

We manifest love by responding to needs of fellow Christians

Spiritually mature ones have this responsibility (Ga 6:1; *it-2* 400; *w92* 11/15 26-9)

Does not mean being busybodies; yet avoid ‘not get involved’ attitude

May need courage motivated by love to approach another

A person may have ‘burden’ we can help bear (Ga 6:2; *it-1* 376; *w76* 401)

When aiding others, keep in mind own weakness and not feel superior (Ga 6:3, 4; *it-1* 376-7; *w76* 401)

Must bear own load of spiritual responsibility before God (Ga 6:5)

Love is manifested by displaying generosity (Ga 6:6; *it-2* 1073)

Has application in taught ones being willing to share materially with one teaching if he is in need

Some congregations helped care for Paul’s material needs (Php 4:15, 16)

Do we have such love for those devoted to caring for the spiritual interests of others?

While we want to do good to brothers, we should also be doing good to others (Ga 6:9, 10)

Might we tend to put personal pleasure before field service?

Comparing our activities past and present, would we conclude we are tiring out, or are we still doing all we possibly can to save others? (1Ti 4:16)

**BE CONFIDENT THAT WE CAN REAP EVERLASTING LIFE (7 min.)**

Must not let persecution, or threat of it, hinder us

Worry about persecution affected Judaizers in Galatia (Ga 6:12; *it-1* 882)

Urged circumcision so other Jews would not persecute them

We need to be alert to possibility that we may develop similar view

Could in little ways start being more concerned with world’s acceptance

Ask: ‘Am I adjusting my ways to win others or because I actually want world’s approval and acceptance?’ (1Co 9:19-22)

Paul may have had scars, like brand marks on slave, proving his willingness to accept persecution for Christ (Ga 6:17; *it-1* 363; *w90* 11/15 23)

Would we be willing to be so marked and to accept persecution?

Be confident that faithfulness will be rewarded (Ga 6:7-9)

Just how are we sowing? Is our first concern our flesh or the spirit?

Are you confident that your life revolves around spiritual things?

Unlike Galatians, our reward (reaping) is in very near future

How sad if one long pursued truth but then tired out (Ga 6:9)

Now stand on threshold of new world; no time to slack off

Now is the time to reexamine own thinking and ways and see if we can sow to spirit more fully

Soon will be able to delight in result, reaping everlasting life

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)