

# **GALATIANS: THE ONE TRUE GOSPEL**



## **WEEK 24 THE DO-GOODERS: SOWING AND REAPING GALATIANS 6:6-10**

Van Nuys Bible Study  
Doulos Fellowship Group  
Grace Community Church

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## Galatians 6:6-10 – The Do-Gooders: Sowing and Reaping

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### The Text

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Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches.

Do not be deceived: God is not mocked,  
for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.

For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption,  
but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

And let us not grow weary of doing good,  
for in due season we will reap,  
if we do not give up.

So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone,  
and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

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### Introduction

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- Chapter 1: There is only one gospel that has been revealed by God, not men.
  - Chapter 2: We are not saved by obeying the law, but by faith alone.
  - Chapter 3: Salvation has always been by faith. The law was never intended to save, but acted as a guardian (or jailer) until Christ came.
  - Chapter 4: As heirs of salvation through faith, we are no longer slaves to sin.
  - Chapter 5: Christ has set us free. Therefore, let's live in the spiritual freedom we have from the flesh's enslavement.
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### Principal Proposition

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We are to take care of each other, pursue righteousness instead of sin, and do good to all people (but particularly fellow believers).

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## Literary Context

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- A. Paul's Gospel is God's Gospel (1:11-2:21)
- B. Paul's Explanation of the Gospel (3:1-4:11)
- C. Paul's Application of the Gospel (4:12-6:10)
  - 1. The Plea not to Return to Bondage (4:12-31)
  - 2. The Appeal to Stand Firm in Freedom (5:1)
  - 3. **The Call to Freedom (5:2-6:10)**
    - a. Freedom through Resistance to Circumcision (5:2-12)
    - b. Freedom through Walking by the Holy Spirit (5:13-26)
    - c. **Freedom through Bearing and Sharing with Others (6:1-10)**

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## Literary Structure

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### The Do-Gooders: Sowing and Reaping

The Charge	(v. 6)
The Crop	(v. 7-9)
The Command	(v. 10)

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## Interpretive Comments

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### The Do-Gooders: Sowing and Reaping

#### The Charge

v. 6 Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches.

- “Let the one who is taught the word”
  - Those who are taught the word = the church.
- “share all good things with the one who teaches”
  - A popular view takes this verse as instruction for believers to material support the church's teachers. This teaching is found elsewhere in Scripture (Mathew 10:10; Luke 10:7; 1 Corinthians 9:14; 1 Timothy 5:17-18).

- Although this phrase does include material possessions (*all* good things), it specifically refers to spiritually excellent things learned from the teaching of God’s Word.



### The Crop

v. 7 Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.

➤ “Do not be deceived: God is not mocked”

- The primary meaning for the word “deceived” here means “led astray.”
- The word “mocked” literally means to “turn up the nose at, treat with contempt.”<sup>1</sup>
- In this particular usage, “outwitted” can also be an accurate translation.<sup>2</sup>
- It is as if Paul is saying, “Don’t fool yourself... God will not stand to be disrespected and He cannot be tricked.”

*You are terribly deceived if you think that God does not deal severely with sin in the lives of His children—including the sin of legalism, which substitutes man’s work for God’s. – John MacArthur*

➤ “for whatever one sows, that will he also reap”

- Based on a material understanding of the previous verse, Martin Luther and John Calvin linked this phrase to financial support for pastors.
- However, given the verses that follow, it is clear that Paul had a wider range of meaning in mind.

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<sup>1</sup> William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 660.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

- This axiom is often equated with similar philosophies (such as Karma) and pithy proverbs like “you get what you give.”
- Taking the context of this passage into consideration, what are the differences between the “sowing and reaping” principle and Karma?

v. 8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

➤ “For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption”

- The believer has two fields to sow in. Planting crops in the fields of your flesh is a bad idea.
- According to our pastor, this “flesh” refers to the residence of sin that still remains in a believer’s life (Romans 7:18).



- Sowing and reaping is a natural, rudimentary law of agriculture. This principle is just as true spiritually as it is physically.
- Those who submit to the passions of the flesh will reap death and decay (Job 4:8, Proverbs 22:6).

➤ “but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life”

- Sowing in the Spirit is the same as...
  - ❖ Walking by the Spirit (Galatians 5:16)
  - ❖ Producing the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)
  - ❖ Being led by the Spirit (Galatians 5:18)
  - ❖ Being filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18)
  - ❖ Abiding in God’s Word (John 8:31)
  - ❖ Abiding in Christ (John 15:7)
  - ❖ Walking in Christ (Colossians 2:6)
  - ❖ Setting our minds on things above (Colossians 3:2)

- Throughout Scripture, eternal life refers primarily to quality rather than duration.

*No sin in a believer's life can separate him from eternal life, but any sin in his life corrupts his reflection and enjoyment of that eternal life. That is why some Christians are among the most miserable, unhappy, and wretched of people. A persistently sinning believer can sometimes be more miserable than an unbeliever, simply because his sin is in constant conflict with and warring against his new nature in Christ. The sinning Christian has a battle raging within him that an unbeliever never experiences. The believer who sows to his own flesh does not lose the Spirit, but he loses the fruit of the Spirit, among which are love, joy, peace, and patience (Galatians 5:22). – John MacArthur*

- David did not pray, “Restore my salvation to me.” He prayed, “Restore to me the joy of my salvation.”
- Those who sow righteousness reap the blessings of eternal life.
- Jesus is the ultimate demonstration of the sowing and reaping principle. He sowed perfect righteousness and reaped eternal life... which He gives freely to those who trust in His work.



v. 9 And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

➤ “And let us not grow weary of doing good”

- We cannot afford to become exhausted with righteousness.
- Why do some grow weary of doing good?

➤ “for in due season we will reap”

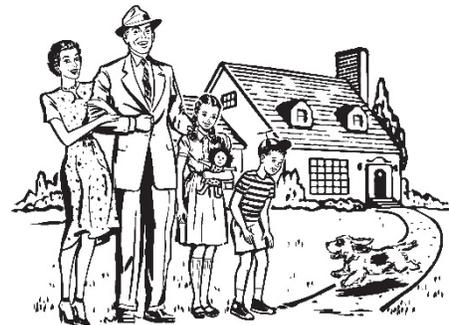
- Seasons change; they come and go. However, they always happen at the right time in the right order.
- After the heat of summer has passed, an autumn harvest of rest and reward is coming for the believer who pursues righteousness.

- “if we do not give up”
  - Perseverance is key.
  - It is often said, “A job half done is as good as none.” The same can be said for reaping a spiritual harvest.

### The Command

v. 10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

- “So then, as we have opportunity”
  - This “so then” is a strong inferential conjunction that literally translates, “therefore then.”
  - Opportunity refers to our time while we have it. Verse 9 says we will reap according to God’s timing. However, we won’t reap a harvest at all if we miss the opportunity to sow.
- “let us do good to everyone”
  - Everyone means everyone, even unbelievers.
  - What is the “good” that is referred to in this verse?
- “and especially to those who are of the household of faith”
  - We are one household; one family.
  - While helping others, we cannot afford to ignore or neglect our brothers and sisters in Christ.



*It is absolutely necessary for Christians to be good to one another. This is not a matter of being selfish; it is a matter of witness. How can we fulfill our mission to show God’s love to the world without showing love to one another? – Philip Graham Ryken*

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## Summary Quote

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*Remember that the epistle to the Galatians is one in which Paul, with special clearness, proves the doctrine of justification by faith alone. So much is this the case that the famous commentary of Martin Luther upon this epistle is perhaps the strongest work extant upon the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith. But that doctrine was never intended to be separated from the scriptural teaching concerning the fruit of faith—namely, good works. Hence we find in the close of this epistle the strongest possible declaration that, if men live in sin, they will reap the result of sin. It is only if, by grace, they are brought to walk in holiness that they will win the rewards of grace.*

– Charles Spurgeon

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## Discussion Questions

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- Taking the context of this passage into consideration, what are the differences between the “sowing and reaping” principle and Karma? (pg. 3)
- Why do some grow weary in doing good? (pg. 5)
- What is the “good” that is referred to in this verse? (pg. 6)



During late-summer church picnics, missionaries Earl Schmitz, Clyde Orson, and Duncan Pratt quickly transition from sowing gospel seeds to spitting watermelon seeds.

## *The Kind of Sowing We Must Do*

Good sowing will bring good reaping. To sow well is to sow under the influence of another Power and to sow in another manner. In fact, it is, as the apostle says, to “sow to the Spirit.” Sowing to the Spirit lifts our sowing altogether above the idea of human merit. He who sows to the Spirit is led and guided by the Spirit of God—led to repent of sin, led to believe in Jesus, led to a new life, led to holiness, led to sanctification. Therefore, he does not take any credit to himself for anything in him that is good, for he knows that it was all implanted there by the Holy Spirit. If we would have a good harvest, we must give up sowing to ourselves and must sow to the Spirit. And the Spirit is freely given to all who seek His aid at the foot of Christ’s cross. Jesus said to His disciples, “Therefore if you, although you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father from heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?” (Luke 11:13). May the Spirit of God come upon you and prompt you so to pray that you may truly sow to the Spirit as to be regenerated in heart and renewed in life, for then you shall most assuredly “reap eternal life.”

We are also to sow in another manner. When the Jews at Capernaum asked Jesus, “What shall we do that we can accomplish the works of God?” He answered, “This is the work of God: that you believe in the one whom that one sent” (John 6:28–29). That is the first thing for you to do if you wish to sow to the Spirit. “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved” (Acts 16:31). When you have rested upon the great atoning work that Christ forever finished on the cross of Calvary, you will begin to walk in newness of life, and you will seek in all things to be conformed to God’s will. So you “will reap eternal life from the Spirit.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Charles Spurgeon, *Galatians*, ed. Elliot Ritzema, Spurgeon Commentary Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013).

## *Reasons Why We Become Weary in Doing Good*

Do you not think that at times our getting lax in Christian work arises from our being very low in grace? As a rule, you cannot get out of a man that which is not in him. You cannot go forth yourself to do your work vigorously if you have lost inward vigor. You cannot minister before the Lord with the unction of the Holy One if that unction is not upon you. If you are not living near to God and in the power of God, then the power of God will not go forth through you. When we become discontented and downhearted, we are out of sorts spiritually. Let us say to ourselves, “Come! My soul! What ails you? This faint heart is a sign that you are out of health. Go to the great Physician and obtain from Him a tonic that shall brace you. Come, play the man. Have none of these whims! Away with your idleness! The reaping time will come, therefore thrust in the plough.”

Is not another reason why we become downhearted to be found in the coldness and indifference of our fellow Christians? We see others doing the Lord’s work carelessly; when we are on fire ourselves we find them to be cold as ice. We get among people in the church who do not seem to care, and thus we are apt to be discouraged. The idleness of others should be an argument for our being more diligent ourselves. If our Master’s work is suffering at the hands of our fellow servants, should we not try to do twice as much ourselves to make up for their deficiencies? Ought not the laggards to be warnings to us lest we also come into the same lukewarm condition? To argue that I ought to be a sluggard because others loiter is poor logic.

Sometimes, too—I am ashamed to mention it—I have heard of Christians becoming weary from want of being appreciated. Their work has not been sufficiently noticed and praised. I will not say much about this cause of faintness because it is so small an affair that it is quite below a Christian. Appreciation! Do we expect it in this world? The Jewish nation despised and rejected their King, and even if we were as holy as the Lord Jesus we might still fail to be rightly judged and properly esteemed. What does it matter? If God accepts us, we need not be dismayed, though all should pass us by.

Perhaps, however, *the work itself* may suggest to us a little more excuse for being weary. It is hard work to sow on the highway and amidst the thorns—hard work to be casting good seed upon the rock year after year. It is a pity, when you have had some years of rough work, to give all up *now*. Why, now you are going to enjoy the sweets of your former labor. He who has passed so many miles of a rough voyage will not have to go over those miles again; do not think of going back. Indeed, to go back in this pilgrimage would be shameful, and as we have no armor for our back, it would be dangerous. Putting our hand to this plough and looking back will prove that we are unworthy of the kingdom. If there are a hundred reasons for giving up your work of faith, there are fifty thousand for going on with it. Though there are many arguments for fainting, there are far more arguments for persevering. Though we might be weary—and do sometimes feel so—let us wait upon the Lord and renew our strength, and we shall mount up with wings as eagles, forget our weariness, and be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Charles Spurgeon, *Galatians*, ed. Elliot Ritzema, Spurgeon Commentary Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013).