

Living Life God's Way

Chapter Three: Planting Crops of Life and Blessing

Spiritual truth to be mastered: Spiritual truth to be mastered: Planning daily, monthly, and yearly with God concerning the relationships He wants me to sow into and the character qualities/projects He wants me to produce in my life and the lives of others.

Why do we need this truth operating in our lives? Without this skill we will live without planning and planting the crops which produce the life Father longs to see in our lives.

WEDNESDAY:

WEDNESDAY: I am committed, Father, to accept full responsibility for my actions and reactions as we strategically plant the crops of life.

John 5:17: “But He answered them, ‘My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.’”

John 5:30: “I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.”

Galatians 6:5-7: “For each one will bear his own load. The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him. Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.”

We need to begin to “see” where Father is working and come alongside of His plan. We will only be as effective in our work as we are perceptive of where He is working. When we see where He is working, our level of tension decreases. If we stay tense, we can't survive.



How do we practice the truth of planting crops?

We are partners with God. He works with us, not for us. He gives us new levels of responsibility as we grow up. The law of action and consequences is one of God's most fundamental laws. Ideas have consequences because they lead to attitudes and actions. Every thought that is in our head builds attitudes that show up in our actions. The summation of a person's actions is his character. We exist in a community of actions and ideas. They are intertwined.

Faith is sown by what you think and speak. There is life in Him and His Word—what He thinks and says.

Neurosis is the sickness we have spiritually when we do the same thing over and over again and expect a different result. It is the fundamental law of sowing and reaping that promises, “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap” ([Galatians 6:7](#)). It was this revelation to the common man during the Reformation that led to modern science, namely market economy, scientific method, etc. What you sow, you reap; this is true both in the spiritual and in the physical.

The heart of Christianity is found in sowing to God. Putting God's seed into your life and the lives of other people plants crops of blessing. **The first evidence of our fallen state is the "blame game."**

Proverbs 18:2: "A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself."

IT'S NOT MY FAULT!

- Freudianism
- Evolution
- Marxism
- Devilism
- Behaviorism

Solving the problem doesn't start "out there"; it starts "in here." We are responsible for our reactions. We are free to choose our responses to the training God sends. Jesus demonstrated this in an ultimate way on the cross. He went voluntarily. It was about Him, not about the Romans. It was about Him, not Satan, not the Pharisees, not Pilate. Our problems are not primarily about Satan; they are about us. They are a result of what WE have planted. Most of what happens in life is about sowing and reaping.

You cannot learn and accuse at the same time. To learn, I must come out of the blame game. Since blame and accusation exist in the Church—the anointed leader of the earth ([Genesis 1:28](#))—the world has it in spades. When the Church gets a cold, the world gets cancer. God says nine times in the first chapter of Genesis that everything produces fruit after its own kind. What you put energy into comes back to you. The attitudes you invest in come back at you.

We need to WAKE UP! We need to ask God to show us and help us move beyond these destructive patterns. He will not take away the crops you plant. He will make sure you have a "never again" list. He will let you practice this until you master it.

Hebrews 5:14: "But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil."

Why are we longing for His return when He is still longing for us to wake up? We must become awake and aware of what we plant. We must bless God and those He allows us to touch by planting and sowing Life.

What seeds are you investing in the lives of those to whom you relate?

LIFE:

- Reality
- Restitution
- Responsibility
- "Never-Again" List
- Repentance

VS.

DEATH:

- Denial
- Blame
- Anger
- Repetition

- To what thoughts am I giving energy?
- To what attitudes am I giving energy?
- What kind of crops do I, or should I, expect from these seeds?
- Into what relationships am I sowing and why?
- Into what character qualities am I sowing and why?
- Into what projects am I sowing and why?
- What current negative crops are bearing fruit in my life?
- What must I do to stop them?
- What truths must I begin practicing in order to plant long-term crops of blessing in the heart of God, others, and my own life?

Strategic living is about understanding the laws of sowing and reaping.

Isaiah 48:17-19: “Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; ‘I am the LORD your God, who teaches you to profit, who leads you in the way you should go. If only you had paid attention to My commandments! Then your well-being would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea. Your descendants would have been like the sand, and your offspring like its grains; their name would never be cut off or destroyed from My presence.’”

When God doesn’t do a miracle, it is because He is investing in your “never again” list. He lives in planting carefully and systematically to develop you eternally. Eternity is about life, not retirement. Our view of heaven tends to be very juvenile. But by God’s grace and the seeds He has planted, we will begin to see the long-run like He does.

Making It Real:

Galatians 6:5-7: “...for each one should carry their own load. Nevertheless, the one who receives instruction in the word should share all good things with their instructor. Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.”

- Some things in my life I planted long ago and have not been sowing recently. What will I do to eliminate the crops that keep coming up?
- What crops will I strive to plant this week? Which ones is Father telling me to plant and with which people?
- What will be the marker to let me know that I am starting to play the “blame game?”

We move through life with the same problem that showed up in Adam. We want to hide from God because in our innermost being we are ashamed of the sin that operates in us. Therefore, our tendency, in the flesh, is to play the blame game—sometimes at any cost!

“Religion” is a classic example of this tendency to hide. A pattern of behavior (which is what religion is by definition), when worshipped in place of God, becomes idolatry. This is what the Pharisees were guilty of. Religion, as man’s attempt to be God, cannot produce life. It only produces the death from which it was born.

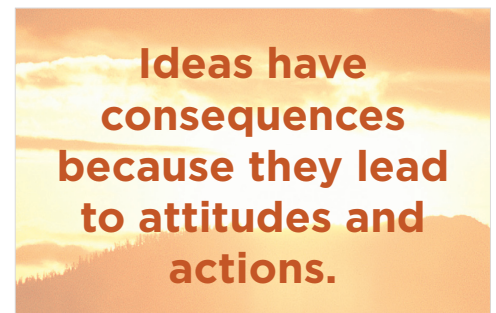
Jesus taught that we know a tree by its fruit. The fruit of “vain repetitions” is broken fellowship with our Father:

Matthew 6:7: “And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.”

The fruit of the world system is the excuse of all people from the consequences of sin through the legitimization of the power to blame. This is seen clearly in the example of Adam.

Some examples of this fruit in the present time are as follows:

- **Freudianism:** Parental blame; Christian cultural sexual repression
- **Marxism/Socialism:** Economic determinism
- **Behaviorism:** Environmental determinism
- **Evolution:** Superiority/inferiority due to ethnicity
- **“Devilism”:** Overestimating Satan’s control over us



When we do not accept responsibility and learn from our mistakes, we cannot grow or receive further responsibility. Our actions are the litmus test for our beliefs. We can confess things all day long, but in the final analysis, our actions will bear out what we really believe. To move forward in God’s plan for our lives, we must realize that responsibility is surrounded by tests that we must pass to qualify to enter that responsibility. Better put: **Power is guarded by problems.**

Our struggles in life are designed to guard us from prematurely touching power and responsibility

beyond our ability to handle it.

Galatians 4:1-2: “What I am saying is that as long as the heir is a child, he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate. He is subject to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father.”

Revelation 2:26: “He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations.”

In these verses, we see that there is a system, be it “trustees and guardians” or things to “overcome,” that doesn’t permit free access to TRUTH and the power therein. The concept of “the water bucket” illustrates this truth. If you have a one-gallon bucket and it is full of water, you cannot add any water, or anything else for that matter, without causing some water to spill out over the edges. To add something new to the bucket, you must first make room for it. This would be even more apparent if the water were frozen! To place a baseball at the bottom of the bucket, you would need to remove quite a bit of ice. Finally, the ball would be in the bottom, but look at all the ice that had to be removed.

This simple example is meant to show that in our lives, we are full (this is not the same as complete!). Something is occupying every part of us. Usually we are not aware of what all those things are. We notice that which we most often visit. For instance, what is the serial number on the back of the computer or phone you are using? Most of us would not know that number without looking because we don’t see it frequently. In the same way, it is also true that there are parts of our being that we don’t visit often and of which we are not aware.

When we enter a problem, it presses on a part of us that we may not even be aware exists. The problems we encounter are designed to do just that. So, there is a kind of displacement that takes place. Without it, nothing changes. Just as in the water bucket example, unless something moves out, nothing else can move in. Because of our fallen nature, we don’t typically like things moving around at this level. Therefore, we protect what is “already in the bucket,” good and bad. We must come to trust that the problems we encounter are “identifiers” of what must move. And we must be willing to let God move it all if He wants.

The great thing about God is that He is relentless in this way! You will encounter the same thing over and over and over until it is worked out. This is “taking up your cross daily” and dying to self.

Matthew 16:24-25: “Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.’”

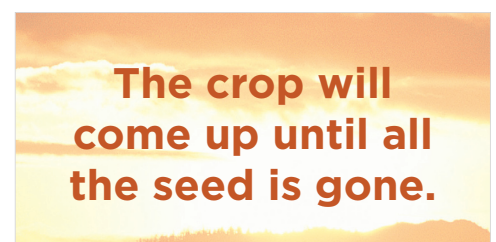
Sowing & Reaping

Hebrews 5:14: “But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.”

I Corinthians 9:24-27: “Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore, I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.”

Philippians 4:9: “Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.”

II Peter 1:10: “Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble.”



Proverbs 6:20-23: “My son, keep your father’s command and do not forsake your mother’s teaching. Bind them always on your heart; fasten them around your neck. When you walk, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; when you awake, they will speak to you. For this command is a lamp, this teaching is a light, and correction and instruction are the way to life.”

Deuteronomy 6:4-9: “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.”

1 John 1:6: “If we claim to have fellowship with Him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.”

1 John 3:10: “This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.”

Step One: The Seed

- Thoughts
- Words
- Energy
- Actions

Step Two: The Crop

- Results

Step Three: My Reaction to the Crop/Results

LIFE:

- Reality
- Responsibility
- Repentance
- Restitution
- “Never-Again” List

DEATH:

- Denial
- Anger
- Blame
- Repetition



As you reflect on this lesson, pray about it and make notes in your journal.
What is the Lord saying, and what are you thinking about today’s workout?