

The Good Life | Week Eight

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

¹⁷For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

¹⁹The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; ²⁰idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Galatians 5:16-24

1. We reap _____ we sow.

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

⁸Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

⁹Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Galatians 6:7-9

2. We reap _____ we sow.

Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.

Matthew 13:8

3. We reap _____ we sow

The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. ¹⁵ The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, ¹⁶ for, “Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

1 Corinthians 2:14-16

Then [Jesus] told them many things in parables, saying: “A farmer went out to sow his seed. ⁴ As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. ⁵ Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. ⁶ But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. ⁷ Other seeds fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. ⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.

Matthew 13:3-8

“Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: ¹⁹ When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. ²⁰ The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. ²¹ But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. ²² The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. ²³ But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”

Matthew 13:18-23

“Sow a thought and you reap an action; sow an act and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny.”

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

THE GOOD LIFE | WEEK EIGHT

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The three principles we discussed tonight are:

- We reap what we sow.
- We reap more than we sow.
- We reap later than we sow.

1. What is your biggest takeaway from the teaching on “sowing and reaping?”
2. When you hear, “We reap later than we sow,” what do you feel? What are some practical actions you can start sowing now, in anticipation of reaping their fruit later in your life?

This week’s teaching concluded with the following quote from American philosopher and poet, Ralph Waldo Emerson:

“Sow a thought and you reap an action; sow an act and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny.”

This quote asserts a series of steps that ultimately lead to a final destination. With this quote as a backdrop, discuss the following questions.

3. Because of our sinful nature, we all have some dysfunctional habits. What patterns do you think have led to these habits in your life? How have you seen these habits affect your life?
4. What are some healthy habits you have in your life right now? How have those habits built your character in a positive way?
5. At the conclusion of this session, some next step follow-up options to The Good Life will be briefly introduced. Before we close, what do you think is one key next step for you to continue to sow the actions needed to build your healthy habits?

Week Eight | Weekly Reflections

Day 1 | Defining What You Reap

Read Galatians 6:7-9

1. What are some examples of dysfunction that you have reaped in your life because of your sinful nature?

Read Galatians 5:16-24 and reflect on the following quote:

“Sow a thought and you reap an action; sow an act and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny.” —Ralph Waldo Emerson

2. What are you currently reaping that reflects one or more of the fruits of the Spirit?
3. In your own words, describe the difference between our fleshly desires and the fruit of the Spirit.

Day 2 | Examining What You Sow

1. What behaviors or practices in your life are helping produce the life that you want to live?
2. What behaviors or practices in your life are producing a life that is different than the one you want to live? What do you need to change with regard to what you sow?

Read Galatians 5:19-21

3. Take some time to list anything in your life that resembles or relates to the examples listed in the verses you just read.

Read Galatians 5:22-23

4. What in your life resembles and reflects the fruit of the Spirit?

Day 3 | Mind of Christ

Read 1 Corinthians 2:14-16

1. What do you think it means for us that we have the “mind of Christ”?

Point of Interest:

Those who have the mind of Christ are able to discern spiritual things that the natural man (or the unbeliever) cannot understand or see. As believers, what gives us the mind of Christ is the Holy Spirit, who indwells us at the moment salvation. (Acts 2:38)

2. What do verses 15-16 tell us about our ability as believers to make wise decisions?
3. What are some ways you can begin to apply the “mind of Christ” to your thoughts and decisions in your everyday life (e.g., relationships, career, finances, parenting, hobbies, etc.)?

Point of Interest:

In Galatians 4:19, Paul references Christ being “formed in you.” This is the idea of Christ becoming so prominent in you that he begins to do his work in the world through you, along with all the others in whom he is formed. It's not about you and your works; it's about him and his work in you. Even in your own heart, Christ must increase and you must decrease (John 3:30).

Day 4 | What's Your Soil Type?

Read Matthew 13:3-9

1. Rewrite this parable in your own words.
2. When comparing the three different types of soil described in the parable above, which soil do you feel like best represents you right now?
3. In what ways do you think your "soil type" has changed over your lifetime? What are some reasons that it has changed?
4. Think about the different environments in which you find yourself. How do these produce growth or diminish growth in your life?

Day 5 | A Day of Reflection

1. Consider the next step options you heard about at The Good Life at the conclusion of your last gathering. What do you think your next “best step” would be?
2. What made you realize you are ready to take this step?