

“Don’t give up on doing good.” (18)

A young man saw an elderly couple sitting down to lunch at McDonald’s. He noticed that they had ordered one meal, and an extra drink cup. As he watched, the gentleman carefully divided the hamburger in half, then counted out the fries, one for him, one for her, until each had half of them. Then he poured half of the soft drink into the extra cup and set that in front of his wife. The old man then began to eat, and his wife sat watching, with her hands folded in her lap.

The young man decided to ask if they would allow him to purchase another meal for them so that they didn’t have to split theirs. The old gentleman said, ‘Oh no. We’ve been married 50 years, and everything has always been and will always be shared, 50/50.’ The young man then asked the wife if she was going to eat, and she replied, ‘It’s his turn with the teeth.’

There’s a real blessing when Christians share with each other and those around them. And after speaking about the importance of sharing each other’s burdens, whilst at the same time carrying your own load. Paul now goes on to speak about another aspect of sharing, the sharing of your finances with the teacher or preacher of God’s word.

Galatians 6:6 “Nevertheless, the one who receives instruction in the word should share all good things with their instructor.” That word, ‘share’ that Paul uses here is the Greek word ‘*koinonia*’ and it means to share in joint partnership. It’s the same word that Luke uses in **Acts 2:42** when he speaks about what the new Christians devoted themselves to, it’s the word, ‘fellowship’.

And so, what Paul is saying here is that Christians have the blessing in sharing their finances to support their preachers or teachers. Paul teaches the same idea over in **1 Corinthians 9:11+12** “**If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? If others have this right of support from you, shouldn’t we have it all the more?**”

You see loved ones, it’s a great privilege and honour to support those who teach us. But loved ones, we need to be sure we’re supporting the right people, that’s why Paul goes on to say in **Galatians 6:7** “**Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.**” It seems that the Galatians were doing what the Corinthians were doing, that is, supporting the wrong teachers.

When Paul later wrote to the church in Corinth, the Corinthians were supporting those who were denying the apostleship of Paul and were teaching a whole bunch of false doctrines. This is what the Galatians were doing, too, they were supporting the Judaizing teachers who were teaching that Christians needed to be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses. And so, Paul warns them that if they do this, they will reap what they sow.

In other words, if they sow by supporting those who are emphasising the works of the flesh in reference to law keeping and meritorious works, then they will reap the results of such behaviour. But if they sow to the Spirit, they will reap the kingdom of God. Paul’s basically telling them that they must stop supporting these Judaizing teachers.

You see loved ones, it’s important to know who were supporting and it’s important to know what they’re teaching. Now we can deceive ourselves into thinking that what we’re doing is right, who we’re supporting is right. There are many preachers out there who deceive themselves and those around them. There are many Christians who deceive themselves into thinking that their behaviour is acceptable to God. **Job 13:9** says, “**Would it turn out well if he examined you? Could you deceive him as you might deceive a mortal?**” Job asks, **if God were to examine you, what would He find in your life?**

1 Corinthians 6:9+10 “**Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.**”

Paul says, don’t be deceived, don’t go convincing yourself that God will accept your sinful behaviour and allow you to enter the kingdom of heaven. Now you can deceive me and you can deceive yourself, but make no mistake about it, no one can deceive God. If we sow spiritual things, we will reap spiritual things. If we sow fleshly, we will reap what the flesh produces.

In the context, Paul is basically saying, if these Galatian Christians continue to invest their money into these false teachers. These false teachers who were promoting a gospel which included legalistic law-keeping.

They will ultimately reap the consequences of supporting them. **And what is it they will reap? 2 Thessalonians 1:8+9** “He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might.”

This is a common mistake that many so-called Christians make because they’re being taught what they call ‘**the prosperity gospel**’. This is a common mistake that many so-called Christians make because they’re being taught that they can live their lives anyway they want, because ‘**once your saved, your always saved**’. You see, loved ones, we must never deceive ourselves into thinking that we can escape the consequences of our sinful behaviour. And if you believe that you can just live your life in any way you want, Paul says your actually mocking God. God says that we will reap what we sow, not only in this life, but also in that which is to come. **Romans 2:6** “**God will repay each person according to what they have done.**”

Now before we move on let me explain something that troubles me, especially when I hear Christians speaking about sowing and reaping. Many Christians wrongly believe in ‘**karma**’, saying that the principle of sowing and reaping and karma is the same. **Karma** is a belief in Hinduism and Buddhism, something that isn’t mentioned anywhere in the Bible. **The Merriam-Webster dictionary says Karma is ‘the force created by a person’s actions that is believed in Hinduism and Buddhism to determine what that person’s next life will be like’ or ‘the force created by a person’s actions that some people believe causes good or bad things to happen to that person’.**

In other words, **karma** teaches people to believe that they will always get what they deserve. If they do good, good things will naturally come their way, if they do bad, bad things will inevitably come, and so on and so forth. While the idea of having good come around again for the good things we do. And having bad come around again for the bad things we do, sounds like the sowing and reaping principle of **Galatians 6:7**, it really isn’t.

Karma insists on receiving the returns of what we do today in the afterlife, something like ‘**if you’re a bad man today, you’ll be a dirt-eating fly in the next life.**’ But the Bible gives us just one simple explanation to say what we deserve. **Romans 3:10** “**There is no one righteous, not even one.**” **Romans 3:23** “**All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.**” **Romans 6:23** “**For the wages of sin is death.**”

The Bible simply says that all of us deserve nothing good for what we’ve done and how we’ve lived. **Karma** says we can do good and receive our due after this life. But the Bible says there’s nothing we can do in this life to make us worthy of receiving goodness in this life and in the life to come. What’s more, **karma** says all of us will live again, to either a better or worse life based on what we do today. The Bible, however, says that we can only live, if we believe in the Son of God.

John 3:16+17 “**For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.**” In other words, our actions can’t win a better afterlife for us, only the blood of Jesus can.

Paul continues and says in **Galatians 6:8** “**Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.**” Notice how Paul concludes with what he’s been teaching throughout the letter. He’s contrasting those who sow to the Spirit, with those who are sowing to the flesh. **Galatians 1:6-9** “**I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God’s curse! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God’s curse!**”

Paul says that those who sow to the flesh will reap the curse of God. In **Galatians 5:20+21** after giving us list of sins which says if your continually involved in these sins, you won’t inherit eternal life. Which tell us if we’re not involved in those sins, we will reap eternal life. You see, living after the words of the Spirit brings quality to this life and the inheritance of the new heavens and earth to come.

In other words, those who sow to the works of the flesh will reap certain destruction but those who sow to the Spirit will reap certain life. The Greek word for eternal is ‘**aionion**’ and Paul is using in reference to the quality of life to come. Yes, Christians have this life now as a result of God’s grace, but it will continue into the future in the presence of God.

Galatians 6:9+10 “Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”

Let me ask you, do you ever get tired of doing good? Do you ever think to yourself, what’s the point in helping people when we never see any results? Loved ones, we’re not responsible for making Christians, God is. But we need to let others know of that good news, to give them a chance to become Christians. And to share that message with others in order for God to work on those people with His word. And the reason we do good works, is simply because God has work for us to do.

Why do you think we’re Christians in the first place? Is it just for us to enjoy salvation? Or does God have good works for us to do? Ephesians 2:10 “For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

You see, God has work for us to do, it’s all prepared for us, but we need to make ourselves available to do those good works. Too many Christians have become lazy or discouraged simply because they don’t understand why they’re doing those good works in the first place.

Matthew 5:16 “Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” Doing good works isn’t about us, it isn’t even about those we help, it’s about giving God the glory that only He deserves. And remember that when we do good, we’re not doing them so we can put God in our debt. We’re not doing good so that we can get into heaven. We’re doing good deeds because we appreciate the salvation that God has given us. We do good, because we are saved, not in order to become saved. We do good, because we are in Christ, not in order to come into Christ.

Philippians 2:12+13 “Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfil his good purpose.”

Leonardo da Vinci had started work on a large canvas in his studio and for a while he worked at it, choosing the subject, planning the perspective, sketching the outline, applying the colours, with his own unique genius. Then suddenly he stopped, the painting still unfinished, and then he invited one of his students to complete the work. The student protested that he was unworthy and unable to complete the great painting which his master had begun. But da Vinci silenced him and said, ‘will not what I have done inspire you to do your best?’

Jesus began two thousand years ago, to fulfil the Father’s will by His good works and His sacrifice on the cross. He delivered His message, but He wants us to finish the picture. There are good works to be fulfilled and we need to make it our business to finish them and so fulfilling those works He has planned for each of us. You see, the legalist will go to the judgment day in doubt because they have trusted in their own performance. But the sons of faith will go to the judgment day with boldness because they have trusted in the atonement sacrifice of Jesus.

Loved ones, don’t give up with your good deeds, you’re doing God’s work and He promises that you will reap a harvest. We understand that between seed time and harvest comes a time of waiting. After a seed is planted, the heat, moisture and pressure of the ground finally causes the outer hull to crack open. Then roots shoot up, digging their way through the ground but it takes time for this to happen, and it takes place underground. Above the ground, you can’t tell anything is happening and that’s the way our lives are.

After we plant the Gospel seed, we feel like nothing is happening, but all kinds of things are happening inside where we can’t see. And like the seed that bursts through the ground with a beautiful green shoot, our seeds will finally come into a beautiful manifestation of God in our lives. Now you might still be thinking, ‘well, I don’t see any harvest, I’ve been planting seed for years.’

Maybe you’re not seeing a harvest because you’ve already given up, maybe you’ve grown tired in doing good deeds and don’t see anything for your labour. Maybe your tired of people having a go at you because of your good deeds. If that’s you this morning, then let me point you to Jesus. Hebrews 12:3 “Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.”

Aren’t you glad that Jesus didn’t give up? Aren’t you glad, He didn’t give up on us?

You see loved ones, we need to understand that God's timing is often a mystery. He doesn't do things on our timetable but His word promises that He will not be late, not one single day. **Habakkuk 2:3** "For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it lingers, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay."

God causes things to happen at exactly the right time! Our job isn't to figure out when, but to make up our minds that we won't give up until we cross the finish line. We do good works because God has them prepared for us to do and we don't give up because Jesus didn't give up on us.

Now there are some Christians out there that believe we should only look after each other. But Paul says the opposite, he says Christians must 'do good to all people'. **Titus 3:8** "This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone."

Paul says to the Galatians, 'do good to all people', and to Titus he says, 'doing good is excellent and profitable for everyone'. And so, there's not a soul on this planet that we can exclude from doing good to. **But why would Paul say, 'especially to those who belong to the family of believers'?**

They say that charity begins at home and that's certainly true. Too many Christians, even among our own number go unnoticed because they're too embarrassed to ask for help. Some of them won't ask for help because their pride gets in the way. And loved ones, if you're in need this morning, and your being offered help, you need to accept that offer of help in order for the church to fulfil this command.

I remember years ago when one of my children asked for some help but I said 'no'. They then turned around and said to me, 'if it was someone on the street asking for help, you wouldn't think twice about it'. Loved ones, if we're so quick to help those who aren't Christians, we should be twice as quick to help our own. When we do good to those who aren't Christians, we're proclaiming to the world that Jesus is our Lord. And when we do good to those within our church family, we're reminding them that they too have made Jesus their Lord. In other words, all our good works not only benefit us but benefit the world too.

But the glory for doing those good works goes to God. **Psalm 115:1** "Not to us, LORD, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness." Let's continue to support our good preachers and teachers. But let's stop fooling ourselves into thinking that God will accept any sin we're continually practicing.

If we're going to reap anything, make sure we're reaping spiritual things, not fleshly things. Let's continue to do good to everyone, Christian or not, so that God may be glorified in and through our good deeds.