

## 2 Corinthians 9:1-15 Sowing and Reaping

Have you ever been in a situation where someone had good intentions but they lacked follow through?

A) If you are not careful that can become a very frustrating thing

B) But what if you could encourage that person in a way that prompts them to follow through on their good intention?

C) Well that is exactly what we see the Apostle Paul doing here in 2 Corinthians 9

**Chapter 9 is a continuation of Chapter 8**

A) In Chapter 8 Paul begins to encourage the believers in Corinth to follow through on a commitment they made

B) Due to a famine and persecution the Mother Church in Jerusalem was really suffering.

C) So Paul saw this as a wonderful opportunity for the gentile Churches in Macedonia to encourage their Jewish bros/sis in Jerusalem

**D) So Paul reached out – asking that these gentile churches to receive an offering to help out the believers in Jerusalem.**

E) Well the church in Corinth which was a wealthy church was one of the first to respond.

1) and they responded with enthusiasm

Yes we are in – Happy too –

**But as time went by for one reason or another they never followed through on their promise.**

A) So Paul is writing to encourage them using the example of the Churches in Macedonia V.1-6

B) An encouragement to abound in THIS grace V.7-8

#3 Through the example of Jesus V.9

Here in chapter 9 he is continuing his encouragement – and I think we can really learn from Paul's example of how to do this

A) #1 He gives them the Benefit of the doubt - Now concerning the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous (not necessary) for me to write to you; <sup>2</sup> for I know your willingness, about which I boast of you to the Macedonians, that Achaia was ready a year ago;

B) Paul is believing that they still want to help and he is giving them the benefit of the doubt that there is a reason for the delay

1) Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 13 – **Love believes all things and hopes all things.**

C) What is your natural tendency in dealing with others?

1) Do you naturally think the worst of the best about others?

**D) Paul is thinking the best – I know your willingness – I boasted about it and that hasn't changed.**

**#2 Paul tells them that others were encouraged by their Zeal -V.2c your zeal has stirred up the majority.**

A) It is interesting how zeal can be used to have a contagious affect upon the body of Christ.

B) I have experienced this with Disaster relief – one church –

1) We are going and you almost experience FOMO I don't want to miss out !!!!!!!

C) FOMO needs to be mixed with confirmation from the Lord too.

D) But often time the right actions of others can have a contagious effect on the others

1) You see the zeal of someone else – yea I want to do that too.

E) So to encourage the believers in Corinth Paul says – Your zeal stirred up or had a positive affect on the other churches

**#3 He sent men ahead to help them get ready V.3-5**

<sup>3</sup> Yet I have sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this respect, that, as I said, you may be ready; <sup>4</sup> lest if *some* Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we (not to mention you!) should be ashamed of this confident boasting.

<sup>5</sup>Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your generous gift beforehand, which *you had* previously promised, that it may be ready as *a matter of generosity* and not as a grudging obligation.

**Because Paul was giving them the benefit of the doubt that they would still want to help –**

**A)He said I am sending an advance team**

**B)Paul realized it would be embarrassing for them and for him if they were not ready.**

**1)I have made the mistake before in marriage (listen young married guys or soon to be married guys)**

**C)I have made the mistake of bringing someone home for dinner unannounced - NOT GOOD**

**1)Awkward – your wife is not ready – the house is not ready**

**D)Awkward – people can tell – you feel obligated to take care of them.**

**1)My wife doesn't like those kind of surprises.**

**But there have been plenty other times where even just giving her an hours' notice – I call - Babe – (Always call – hear tone – don't text)**

**A)Those times an hours' notice – babe is it ok if I bring so and so home for dinner.**

**B)We show up the house looks good – Denise is her normally hospitable self –**

**C)This is the idea – Paul is saying I am not just calling ahead –**

**1)I am sending guys to help you get ready – get things together**

**D)So that when the team shows up that is coming to collect the offering –**

**1)they won't catch you off guard but will be blessed by your readiness**

**So we see this beautiful picture from Paul – on how to help someone follow through**

**A)#1 Give them the benefit of the doubt – there is a reason for the delay**

**B)#2 Build them up by telling them the affect that their good intentions have already had on others.**

**C)#3 Do what you physically can to help them get unstuck.**

**1)Easier to tell someone to get with it but it makes all the difference in the world – when you help them.**

**Now in V.6 Paul introduces this principle about Sowing and reaping**

<sup>6</sup> But this *I say*: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

**Now Paul is using this principle in regards to the offering they were going to give –**

**A)Sow sparingly reap sparingly**

**Sow bountifully you will reap bountifully**

**B)Can't sow a little and expect a whole field to grow A Spiritual law and Principle here.**

**D)There are laws that we all live in conjunction with**

**1)Example Gravity – Jump – Hurt**

**2)Electricity: Don't see it and yet you pay for it – see the effects of it**

**Three Laws of Sowing and Reaping**

**#1 You reap AFTER the same kind! Apple seed – not plum tree**

**A)Sow wheat not going to get Corn**

**You reap after the same kind!**

**B)And this is a principle that applies in every area of our walks.**

**C)I meet with Christians who wonder why their walk with Jesus is anemic**

**1)Sowing sparingly into their relationship with Christ –**

**D)Spending way too much time involved in other things**

<sup>7</sup> Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. <sup>8</sup> For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. Galatians 6:7-8

**A)You sow to the spirit you are going to reap life**

B) You sow to the flesh and you are going to reap corruption {After its Kind

C) Some people want to experience growth spiritually

1) But they spend their whole lives sowing to nonsense - it is not going to happen

D) Not going to reap life or fruit when you are sowing to the flesh

1) You reap after the same kind

*Hosea 8:7 "Those who sow to the wind, will reap the whirlwind."*

A) In other words if you take the seed of your life and resources and sow to every wind of the world

B) Every passing fancy / every earthly pleasure

C) Don't be surprised if you having nothing Left –

1) don't be surprised if you don't have anything to show for your efforts

D) Law #1 You reap after its kind

Applies in Marriage Couples who wonder why their marriage is struggling?

A) Marriage is like a garden in two ways –

B) #1 You get out of it what you put into it – Like a garden sow tomatoes – get tomatoes not grapes

C) Marriage if you are sowing seeds of neglect and disrespect – distrust – that is what you will get.

D) But if you are sowing seeds of love and respect you are going to reap the blessing of that.

#2 Another way that marriage is like a garden is this: Neglect a garden – things die and weeds grow

A) Neglect your marriage – neglect your spouse – things die – love dies – trust dies

B) Weeds grow – weeds of anger, bitterness, tension, and individualism

C) But if you sow seeds of trust – love – grace into your relationship – sow bountifully – reap bountifully

D) A wife who is well loved is confident – in her appearance –

1) the way she carries herself – confident in her husband's love

E) Not confident you see it – plays out in how she carries herself

This principle of sowing and reaping is also true in our relationship with kids and grandkids

A) Pour into them sparingly – reap sparingly –

B) But if you pour into them bountifully (a lot) – reap bountifully

C) So the first Law of sowing and reaping is you You reap AFTER the same kind!

#2 You only reap, AFTER you've sown!

A) The Harvest comes after the planting - -

B) Now for a believer that can be tough – because it can seem lie a long season of sowing into your marriage / 1) Or your ministry before you see some fruit – or before the harvest comes

C) We want instant Harvest – instant fruit – but it never happens that way.

Paul wrote in Galatians 6:9 **And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.**

A) Here is a mistake the Backslidden person often makes

B) He sows to his flesh – and nothing happens – no immediate consequences –

1) business is still going good, etc

C) He thinks God is still blessing – Sure I am

sleeping with my girlfriend or I am getting high

1) He things It is cool – things are still going good

D) Note in Due season you will reap –

Reaping takes time we don't reap right away the 1st is that God is gracious and longsuffering

A) So he is going to give you time to come to your senses – time to repent

But note this – You are going to reap in time

A) But this is also a reminder to us – that when we are sowing good seeds – don't be in a rush see results

**B)Don't grow weary – but you have to sow something and then wait – water – be patient**

**C)#1 You reap AFTER the same kind!  
#2 You reap AFTER you sow!**

**#3 You reap MORE than you sow!**

**A)You plant one apple seed - but you get a tree with tons of apples on it !**

**B)In the Spiritual realm – you sow to the Spirit & God is never going to be your debtor**

Proverbs 3:9-10

“Honor the Lord with your possessions, And with the firstfruits of all your increase; 10 So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine.”

**C)You will always reap more than you sow**

Sparingly reap sparingly - Sow bountifully – reap bountifully

**This reminds me of the Lord said to the people of Israel through the prophet Malachi –**

<sup>10</sup>Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house.

And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. Malachi 3:10

**A)Now listen – we don't give to get – this is where the “Prosperity teachers” get it wrong –**

**B)They make giving and tithing as a means for getting from God –**

1)give \$10 and God will bless 100 fold – wrong and manipulative

**C)No we give to the Lord in response to what he has done in our lives**

**And we give to the Lord – because we understand that it is part of our privilege**

**A)As one way the Lord allows is to partner with him**

**B)But Malachi 3:10 is such a unique passage because it is the only time in the entire Bible where God challenges people – put me to the test**

**C)BASICALLY GOD IS TELLING US – YOU CAN NEVER OUT GIVE ME!**

**Now notice how Paul continues to apply this to his encouragement to the Corinthians about following through on their good intention**

<sup>7</sup>So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, (When it comes to a special offering like this what you give is up to you whatever God lays on your heart)

<sup>7</sup>So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

**A)So make sure you are not giving out of obligation or compulsion – that you are not giving grudgingly –**

**B)oh no offering time!!!!**

1)If that is your heart – God would say – Don't give – I don't need your money – this is my blessing to you.

**C)Here is the indicator. – How we give and serve is going to be revealed by our hearts**

**1)Let him purpose in his heart**

We have already seen this: 2 Cor 8:8 “I speak not by commandment, but I am testing the sincerity of your love by the diligence of others.”

2 Cor. 8:24 - “Therefore show to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love and of our boasting on your behalf.”

**D)It is an indicator of where your affections are – if your affections are not right – note what God says – not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.**

**E)Not grudgingly – Not resistant – or of necessity – there is a need – I must respond – Duty**

1)Don't want to but – it is necessary – No it isn't – God never needs us

**God loves a cheerful – Hilarious giver – Joyful – excited**

**A)Lord thank you for letting me partner with you in this way – in what you are doing in the church – in the world**

**B)Great Gratitude! Thank you so much saved me – my Church – {privilege**

**C)God wants us to learn to live generously – and Paul outlines what happens to us, in us, thru us**

8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

9 As it is written:

"He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever."

**I want to read that again in the NLT**

And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. <sup>9</sup> As the Scriptures say,

"They share freely and give generously to the poor. Their good deeds will be remembered forever."

**You Learn to live generously and this is what is going to happen – You will be enriched personally**

A)And you will leave a lasting legacy – your good deeds will be remembered forever

10 Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, {God is the one who supplies what we have} ...supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness,

**B)Now note this Paul is still looking at giving as seed sown –**

**1)you get seed not to horde but to use**

**C)Your gifts, talents time and resources are like seeds. – not meant to be hoarded**

1)Keep it in the little seed pouch – in a safe – what good is that

**D)Seed is meant to go into the ground{ So too What we have been given is meant to be used – Tool!**

**Listen to V.10 in the NLT – so good**

<sup>10</sup> For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you. <sup>11</sup> Yes, you will be enriched **in every way** so that you can always be generous. NLT

**A)That is what God is wanting to do in us – he wants to produce in us a harvest of generosity**

**B)Generosity becomes a part of your DNA**

**C)Discovery what Jesus said is true – it is more blessed to give than to receive! – FUN**

**Giving is not God's way of raising funds – it is his way of raising kids.**

**A)God is a giver – His kids to be givers too.**

**B)When we learn to live generously like the Lord – he promises to supply for our needs**

**C)And he promises to reward our generosity**

**Jesus taught that even the smallest gift, if given with the right heart, would not go unrewarded.**

"And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward."

(Matthew 10:42)

**A)Abound for every good work – He is going to by His grace sustain us**

**B)Here is what happens when you live generously from the right heart:**

**#1 You are blessed or enriched –**

**C)Note the three Further results – NLT**

And when we take your gifts (your offering) to those who need them, they will thank God. <sup>12</sup> So **two good things will result from this ministry of giving**—#1 the needs of the believers in Jerusalem will be met, #2 and they will joyfully express their thanks to God.-> <sup>13</sup> As a result of your ministry, they will give glory to God. For your generosity to them and to all believers will prove that you are obedient to the Good News of Christ.

**#3 Your hearts will forever be joined together**

<sup>14</sup> And they will pray for you with **deep affection** because of the overflowing grace God has given to you. <sup>15</sup> Thank God for this gift too wonderful for words!

**Here is what happens when you live generously from the right heart:**

- **You are blessed or enriched**
- **Your life leaves a lasting legacy**
- **Others are helped**
- **God is Glorified**
- **Your hearts are forever joined together in a deep affection with those who have been helped**