

The 7 Laws of the Harvest:

Part Seven – We Cannot Do Anything About Last Year’s Harvest, But We Can About This Year’s.

Galatians 6:1 through Galatians 6:10 (NKJV)

¹Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who *are* spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. ²Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. ³For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. ⁴But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. ⁵For each one shall bear his own load.

⁶Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.

⁷Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸For 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. ⁹And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. ¹⁰Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

The laws of the harvest are important because they reveal truth about how God made the world to work. If the Bible is our basic instruction before leaving earth, then we need to know what it says about every area of life.

If God set up a system for the kingdom we need to know how it works.

So far we have discussed the first law which is “We can only reap what has been sown” and the second law which is “We reap the same in kind as we sow.” We have also discussed the third law of the harvest which is “We Reap in a Different Season than When We Sow”. The fourth law states “We Reap More Than We Sow”. Two weeks ago, Rev. Jackson inspired us with the fifth law which is “We Reap In Proportion To What We Sow”. Last week we learned the sixth law of the harvest which is “We Reap the Full Harvest of the Good Only if We Persevere; The Evil Comes to Harvest on Its Own”. Today, as we bring this series to a close, we will examine the seventh and final law of the harvest which states:

We Cannot Do Anything About Last Year’s Harvest, But We Can About This Year’s.

We will lay a foundation for this law, discuss Last Year’s Harvest, This Year’s Harvest, share some tips on this law and conclude for the day.

Foundation for this law

Hebrews 6:7 through Hebrews 6:8 (NKJV)

⁷For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; ⁸but if it bears thorns and briars, *it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.*

Has God been pleased with your harvest?

Our God is a God of purpose. He has a reason for everything he produces in our lives. Every moment of our lives is meaningful for God. Think about it. He calls us out of darkness into his marvelous light so we can show forth his praises.

We are to share the gospel because it is his plan to reconcile the world back to himself. We are to love one another so people would know we are his disciples. We are to share our gifts because freely we have been given and freely we must also give. We study his word so that we can be workmen who are not ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Our God has a purpose for our lives collectively and individually. He has invested gifts, talents, physical abilities, mental faculties, educational opportunities, family relationships, work environments, and everything else we have in our lives. God expects a harvest. He has sown and by his own law of the harvest, he expects to reap.

The writer of Hebrews explains how land that is soaking up good rain should produce good fruit. When it does, it is blessed of God. But if it soaks up the rain and still produces thorns its close to being cursed and should be burned.

Once we receive the harvest there is nothing we can do to change it. If our harvest is good, we can bring it into the storehouse but we can't make it better. We can't go into the field and demand that it yields to us more than we have reaped. We can't make it worse either. We can't make the field take any of the harvest back. We can't go outside to a corn stalk and make it go back into the ground.

The same is true of a poor harvest. Once we have reaped the harvest that is poor we can't make the ground instantly produce good fruit. We can't turn thorns into potatoes. We can't turn thistles into corn.

Once we have reaped the harvest, it is either blessed of God or it is worthy of being cursed and burned. We can either gather it in or cast it out.

We Cannot Do Anything About Last Year's Harvest, But We Can About This Year's.

Last Year's Harvest

There is a reality that we must all come to grips with. That reality is we have all experienced the other six laws of the harvest whether we were aware of it or not. Think about where you are in life right now. You are here by the grace of God and the harvest you have reaped.

Last year, last month, last week, last night are all the same. Whatever we have reaped in our lives are parts of the harvest we have sown in other seasons.

Whatever we have sown in the area of education in our yesteryears, we are reaping today. If we completed high school or not, if we went to college or not all affect our harvest. Whatever we have sown in the area of finance in our yesteryears, we are reaping today. If we were good stewards we have something in our storehouses, if not, we may be suffering lack.

Whatever we have sown professionally in our yesteryears, we are reaping today. If we were hard workers who were on time, and did our work well, we may be blessed on the job. If not, we may have trouble holding down a job. Whatever we have sown in our health during our lives, we are reaping today. If we ate poorly or didn't take care of ourselves we probably have "a leak in these old buildings." But if we did well, we may be blessed with a better quality of life in our latter years.

Whatever we have sown socially in our yesteryears, we are reaping today. If we were mean and hateful towards others, we may be lonely today. If we were kind and respectful, we may have many good friends. Whatever we have sown in our families during our yesteryears, we are reaping today. If we have sown discord and hatred, then we don't get along. If we have sown love and fellowship, our families may be close.

That is our reality.

"We have only reaped what has been sown"

"We have reaped the same in kind as we sow."

"We are reaping in a different season than when we sowed"

"We are reaping more than we have sown"

“We are reap in proportion to what we have sown”

“We are reaping the full harvest of the good only if we have persevered; the evil has come to harvest on its own”.

This reality is true and I know it is true because some of us are living today with regrets. Young people, pay attention to us when we tell you about our regrets. Many of us adults today learned too late about the laws of the harvest.

We didn't do as well in school and we regret it sometimes because our lives could have been better if we had graduated from high school or gone to college. We wasted resources trying to look good and have a good time and wish we had all that money back we spent on clothes and cars.

We let our lust and emotions get in the way and regret the relationships and failed marriages that could have been avoided by doing things God's way. We regret the years we wasted in the streets chasing the world when we could have been living for God.

We regret the hard times we gave our parents and the way we were too proud to tell them we loved them before they died. We regret our alcohol and nicotine addictions. We regret our lifestyles that led to sexually transmitted diseases and abortions. We regret our lies and the things we stole. We regret our failures. We regret being up to our ears in debt. We regret the days we ate up the seed instead of sowing into good ground.

Some of us adults are not genuinely happy. Some of us are struggling to survive. Some of us have lived a hard life. Some of us are cold and empty inside. Some of us are in denial and blaming others. Some of us are struggling to forgive ourselves. Some of us are emotionally paralyzed and can't get over where we ended up.

Last year's harvest is still glaring at us and we can't do anything about it. Do not be deceived! God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man sows, that he will also reap. Right now, today, the harvest of our lives is either worthy of being blessed or burned. The decisions you make today will soon be your yesterday.

This law is absolute.

We Cannot Do Anything About Last Year's Harvest, But We Can About This Year's.

This Year's Harvest

We can't change the harvest from last year. But we can reap a different harvest if we are willing to sow again.

Philippians 3:1 through Philippians 3:14 (NKJV)

¹Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you *is* not tedious, but for you *it is* safe.

²Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! ³For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, ⁴though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: ⁵circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; ⁶concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

⁷But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; ¹⁰that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

¹²Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. ¹³Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, ¹⁴I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

In Paul's life, he had sown mightily into his life as a Jew. He was a Jew of the Jews. He was fluent in the law and blameless in his lifestyle. His pedigree was without reproach. His zeal was unmatched. His achievements were off the scale.

But Paul recognized the harvest of all those things was useless. None of that would give him salvation in God through Jesus Christ. None of that would give him eternal life. The harvest of those things in his life was counted loss. They were seen as dung.

In many ways it could have been cursed and burned. And there was nothing Paul could do to change his old harvest. So what does he do? He forgets about last year's harvest. It's worthless to him. He can't eat it and live off of it. So he decides to gather

whatever seeds he has from his old life and plant them again in the fertile ground of Jesus Christ.

Look at what he says in verse 7.

⁷But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; ¹⁰that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Paul says whatever harvest I'm working with, whatever gain it was to me, I'm turning it over. He is basically saying "I can't do anything about last year's harvest, but I can about this year's." I'm going to count last year's harvest as a loss. I'm not going to consume it. I'm not going to continue with life as usual.

From this point on, I'm not sowing to get what I have received. I'm sowing to get all that Christ has to offer.

I'm going to bring my zeal for the law to Christ. I'm going to bring my knowledge of the law to Christ. I'm going to bring my religious purity as a Pharisee to Christ.
I'm going to seize my opportunity and sow again!

Our scripture from Galatians says ...

¹⁰Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let's sow again. Therefore, as God has given us life today, let's sow again. God has given us another day to live, let's sow again. We didn't give as he commanded, let's give again. We failed to give him the praise, let's praise again. We didn't love our neighbors, let's love again. We didn't pray for the sick, let's pray again. We didn't let God use us in his service, let's serve again.

Last year's harvest is what it is. We can't waste our opportunity feeling sorry for ourselves. We can't give up on God who hasn't given up on us. We need to rise up, plant again, and move on.

If you have lived without a plan for your life, make one today. If you have sown grudges and reaped hatred, sow some forgiveness today. If you have reaped broken relationships, sow love and compassion today. If you are reaping financial difficulties, sow stewardship today. If you are reaping the effects of dropping out of school, sow some classes today. If you have sown lies and are reaping distrust, sow some integrity today.

Paul recognized the opportunity before him. He recognized he could change his direction, sow again, and be with Jesus.

Matthew 8:21 through Matthew 8:22 (NKJV)

²¹Then another of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father."

²²But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

All of the dead places in your life need to be released. Let go of that dead relationship and be with Jesus. Don't get stuck in that dead end job. Be where Jesus wants you to be. Stop hanging with that dead crowd and go with Jesus. Give up those dead works and serve the Lord.

All of those dead people with their dead attitudes need to be left alone.
All of those dead situations with those dead consequences need to be avoided.
All of those dead attitudes that keep us bound need to be cut down and burned.

"Let the dead bury their dead!" Jesus has come that we might have life and life more abundantly.

When God gives you an opportunity to be with him, you have to take it. Jesus said "Follow me." Right now, we must all decide to follow him. Regardless of yesterday and in spite of tomorrow, we must seize the day and choose to follow him today.

So step out. I know you can't see what's going to happen, but step out in faith. Step into what's next. Yesterday is gone. There is no sense in trying to consume a bitter harvest when God has given you an opportunity to sow today. Step into your moment. Take ownership of your opportunities. If God has blessed you to be alive, then this is your moment. Step into your moment with boldness. Step into your future. Each step we take today is one less step we have to take to reach our future. Live today like you see yourself tomorrow.

We Cannot Do Anything About Last Year's Harvest, But We Can About This Year's.

Here are some tips to help us take advantage of this law of the harvest.

1. Understand the other six laws. They are absolute and they affect our understanding of this law.
2. Acknowledge last year's harvest. It happened. You reaped it. That season is over. You don't have to settle for what you have.
3. Learn from last year's harvest. Start with yourself. What did you do and not do? Then move on to the other details of what was done, and what was not done.
4. Seize the opportunities to sow today. If you are alive, you can sow. Its not too late to begin sowing for the future. The decisions you make today will affect your tomorrow.