

Bible Expert: Is ‘Sowing and Reaping’ the Same as ‘Manifesting?’

A slight majority of Americans, according to one survey, believe in the power of “manifestation”—the idea that an individual can bring something to fruition simply by believing it—but such New Age thinking clearly flies in the face of biblical teaching.

Allen Parr, an ordained minister and expert in biblical literacy, recently spoke with CBN’s Faithwire about the practice of “manifestation” and what sets it apart from the scriptural belief in “sowing and reaping,” found in Galatians 6:7-8, in which the apostle Paul wrote, “Whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life” (ESV).

Understanding what the Bible says about “manifestation” is critical in the current cultural moment, particularly given a vast majority of Americans (87%) hold at least one belief often associated with New Ageism, like karma or the principle that “everything is interconnected,” according to a YouGov survey from August of last year.

“These things can be tricky because there is some element—just like in any false teaching—there’s always some element of truth that can get mixed in there because, yes, our thoughts can influence our lives ... but to say that our thoughts can control every aspect of our lives and even bypass maybe what God may want to do is putting ourselves in the place of God, and it can be very dangerous,” Parr explained on CBN’s “Quick Start” podcast.

There’s a key difference, he went on to say, between the

suggestion one can “manifest” his or her own future and believers’ trust in the God-ordained principle of “sowing and reaping.”

While the cultural claim of “manifestation” teaches people they can guarantee their own outcomes, Scripture makes clear Christians can come to God with any request, thought or concern, but it is only the Lord who can—and will—determine the ultimate outcome. Any suggestion to the contrary usurps His authority over all things, as it’s written in Proverbs 16:9, “We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps” (NLT).

7 Signs to Instantly Identify New Age Beliefs

✖ “The mistake that many people make is the Bible doesn’t necessarily tell us what we’re going to reap and sometimes certain organizations, certain groups will try to create a transactional relationship with God, where it’s like, ‘Hey, sow financially and you will reap financially,’” Parr said. “The Bible never teaches that if you sow financially you’re gonna automatically reap financially. It just says sow and you shall reap, so it could very well be that I’m sowing time into the local church, because I know the local church needs me to volunteer, and I might reap another benefit in some other area of my life. ... That’s God’s business.”

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