

Why You Don't Prosper

It's spring! Now is the season for longer days, outdoor fun and one of my favorite pastimes—gardening. I'm no master gardener, but I do enjoy planting on a small scale. There's nothing like freshly picked basil, cilantro or thyme to pack flavor into a dish. And the taste of tomatoes, strawberries and peppers from my own backyard beats anything I can buy in a supermarket.

But the benefits of gardening go beyond great-tasting, nutritious foods. The garden is where many biblical truths are literally brought to life. Through "working the soil," I've gained a better understanding of some deep spiritual precepts, including that of the harvest.

More than likely, most of us have heard teaching or preaching on the topic of a spiritual harvest. But if we are honest with ourselves, we'll admit there are periods when we're not experiencing the bountiful blessings promised in the message. Of course, there are many reasons why this might be the case, but let's start with the concept of sowing and reaping.

Sowing and Reaping

God's natural laws hold true in the spirit realm. This is especially clear with sowing and reaping: "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" (Gal. 6:7). So when we experience periods of barrenness, where an expected harvest did not come to pass, the first question to ask is, "What, if anything, have I sown?"

In the natural, we don't question this concept. In my own garden, if I sow beet seeds, I know beets will grow. I don't pray for beets, claim beets or "speak life" into the soil for a harvest of beets if I haven't planted the seed. Likewise, I don't look for peppers if it's beets that I've sown. We have no problem accepting sowing and reaping as a natural law. But we must also accept it as a spiritual law.

What Did You Sow?

Are we expecting to reap a financial blessing—when we haven't spread seeds of generosity?

Do we anticipate the harvest of a better job—when we haven't scattered seeds of diligence and integrity with our current employer?

Are we looking for an outpouring of favorable relationships—when we haven't sprinkled seeds of kindness, commitment and courtesy?

The law of sowing and reaping even applies to our physical health. Many times we are afflicted because our lifestyles have sown seeds of illness, seeds that will eventually bear the fruit of disease.

God's Love Remains

Truly, God is not mocked. We will reap what we sow. But always remember: While sowing and reaping are laws, they do not reflect God's love. His *agape* love is unconditional. So no matter what the harvest—whether barren or bountiful—God's love toward us remains. And for that, we can rejoice!

Adapted from Dr. Kara Davis's blog. Dr. Davis is a doctor of internal medicine and a former assistant professor of medicine at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She currently practices at the Christian Community Health Center in the Chicagoland area, and she is also the author of Spiritual Secrets to Weight Loss (Charisma House).