

Sowing & Reaping

by Robert B. Thompson

The sermon emphasizes the biblical principle of sowing and reaping, highlighting the importance of our choices and the transformative power of grace in our lives.

Duration: 1:00:08

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, 2 Corinthians 5:1-5, Galatians 6:7, Galatians 6:10

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Community Building"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being real and not deceived by the fantasy of television and virtual reality. He warns against the addictive and destructive nature of pornography, particularly on the internet, and the potential dangers of future technology. The preacher also highlights the need for a strong and caring community within the church, where people can support and learn from one another. Ultimately, he urges listeners to lay hold of life by giving themselves to Jesus every day and not succumbing to the pressures and temptations of the world.

Transcript

2 Corinthians 5. I ask the Lord to help us. Lord, as we come unto you now, it is with appreciation and thanksgiving, Lord, for all that you have done. And it has been marvelous, marvelous, your faithfulness.

We pray for each family represented here, Lord. You know the burdens of the heart. We pray you'll bring in our loved ones into your kingdom.

Oh, God, help us, Lord, hear the cries that are going up to you now from the people here, I pray in Jesus' name, and meet their needs. And, Lord, as I come unto you for the children, Lord, and they're being ministered to, bless those who are helping. Remember those in Tape Land, Lord, who will be hearing this tape.

And all of us together, Lord, that we will hear what you once said this morning. Help us, Lord, through your Holy Spirit as we lift up the name of Jesus. And everyone said, Amen.

You may be seated, and we'll read 2 Corinthians 5, 1 through 5. If you have a New American Standard, you can read along with us. For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. We're going to be reading to verse 5. For indeed, in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven,

inasmuch as we, having put it on, shall not be found naked.

For indeed, while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed. But to be clothed in order that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. Now he who has prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge.

Okay? What I want to talk to you about this morning is simple, and that is reaping what we sow. And this passage that we just read has to do with reaping. We reap a lot of things that we're sowing in this life.

Closeness to God, opportunities for service, authority and power in the spirit realm, whatever else Bible promises. But I want to talk to you just about one aspect of reaping, and that is the body. The body that we're going to reap.

There are two bodies involved here. One is the resurrection. Now, the resurrection, which is the great hope of Christianity, has to do with this present body.

Make no mistake, God is going to raise this body that we have from the dead. That's a central message of the gospel. God is going to raise this body that we have now from the dead.

If that were not true, there'd be no resurrection. But everyone shall be raised. There's no question about being raised.

Everyone, Jesus said in John 5, all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth. Everyone shall be raised. The issue is not being raised.

The issue is what you're raised to. And that's what I want to talk about, the consequences of our behavior. We, as human beings, don't like to think about, we like to try to play life as though you don't reap what you sow.

We abuse our body, eat wrong, don't exercise, but we're hoping to reap hell. Careless with our money and overspend, get too much into the plastic, and we hope to reap solvency. It's just human nature.

We're just hoping that consequences will never catch up with us. Is that true? One of the main tenets of psychology is teaching people that there are consequences, that everyone is responsible for his own behavior. You can't blame anyone else.

One of the tricks of dealing with people is keeping out of the middle so you don't reap what they are sowing. That isn't easy. That is not easy to keep from being caught in the middle.

The art of the thing is to work circumstances around to where people are getting the results of their behavior. That is not always easy. So, of course, when we have young children we have to take the hit.

We do throughout life have to, to a certain extent, pay for what other people are doing. Some of this is profitable and improper. It says we are strong enough to bear infirmities of the weak, but there's something God is saying to the church today in America.

I don't know if it's been obscured or not, but that is the bible principle of sowing and reaping. In fact, I've heard this debated, but there's no debate. It's in the scripture.

It's in Galatians chapter 6. Now, I want you to listen carefully to what is said this morning because it is important to you, and as we're going on the internet, this will be going out on the internet, it's important for Christians to understand that we are going to reap what we sow. We are going to reap what we sow. The basic law of the kingdom.

Now, in Galatians chapter 6, starting with verse 7, and I want you to notice the context here. This is not talking to the unsaved, and it isn't talking to the Jews. It is talking to Gentiles in the Roman province of Galatia who were being propagandized by Jewish Christian teachers who were telling them they had to be circumcised and keep the law.

That's what the book is about. So, we're not talking here with unsaved people. Sometimes this is shelled off on the unsaved.

It's probably, it is, in fact, Romans 2, it is true of all people that we will reap what we sow. We will be judged according to our works, but some tricks in Christian doctrine and so on have left people with the impression that Christians are exempt on the basis of grace. That is not the purpose of divine grace to change what you reap, what you sow, what you reap.

It is not the purpose of divine grace to change what you reap. The purpose of divine grace is to change what you sow. And that is a critical understanding because all of us are going to face the resurrection someday and it is at the time of the resurrection that is the main reaping time.

Now, in life, many times we reap what we are sowing. Immorality can result in disease and abusing your body can result in sickness. But the big thing is the day of resurrection, what you are resurrected to, and I want to repeat this, grace does not change what you reap.

Divine grace, particularly forgiveness through the blood of Jesus, gives you an ability to turn from sowing that which produces death, which is sin. The wages of sin is death. And the sinner comes to Jesus and Jesus says, hey man, I'm going to give you a leg up.

I'm going to forgive the sins that are past. Okay? Now let's get with the program. It is.

And so you start off clean and you have God's Holy Spirit, you have the body and blood of Jesus. Now, get with the program. God will help you.

Let's do what we're supposed to. That's Christianity. It is not an alternative to moral change.

It is the means of an moral change. That's a big difference and will make a big difference in how you live if you realize that grace is not something you can fall back on when you don't do what you're supposed to. Grace enables you to do what you're supposed to and it has given you access past the veil in heaven so that you can come before the Father and get help in Jesus' name in your time of need.

In my little anecdotes that I'm writing up these days, one thing that came to me is, if you have heart problems, angina pains are not fun. They are not fun. Now, I do not recommend them.

Okay? One way you can keep from having them is by laying off the grease. Lay off the fat. Become a low-fat kid.

All the manufacturers are up to this now. So, you can get everything from low-fat peanut butter to low-fat mayonnaise and low-fat fat. I mean, you can get low-fat food.

It's there on the shelf and it's not priced out of sight and it tastes pretty good except for low-fat mayonnaise. They haven't mastered that one yet. So, I do indulge in regular mayonnaise, but the rest of it is cool.

I mean, low-fat tastes the same. Turkey sausage tastes the same. They put in all the spices.

So, you can do it if you want to and you should exercise. I mean, it's good for your heart to get it cranking up a few times a week, not become a couch potato. Now, if you do these things and take your morning aspirin, if you do these things, there's a good chance that you will escape a lot of angina that you might otherwise have the privilege of experiencing.

But grace doesn't cover the grease. If you don't do these things, you may reap the consequences of your carelessness. And I think sometimes Christianity is presented as a way of having grace cover the grease.

In other words, you should live, you should eat right, you should exercise. But if you don't, there's good old grace in the background, you will not reap what you're sowing. Not scriptural.

So, we look at Galatians 6 here and I want to, you can read the context more when you get home, but there's no question that this is talking to the believers in Galatia. I mean, up in both sides of the passage here, it's talking to Christians. Verse 10, for example, in chapter 6. Let us do good to all men, especially to those who are the household of faith.

Not talking to the unsaved, for heaven's sake. So, that's important to understand because when this is read, many times people say, yeah, but that's not talking to Christians because we're saved by grace. Hey, you can fantasize if you want to, but I mean, if we're going to approach the Bible honestly, this is talking to Christians.

So, he says in Galatians 6 verse 7, do not be deceived. We're in a condition of deception today. Do not be deceived.

God is not mocked. They look up to God and say, well, you know, I know I shouldn't fornicate and I know I shouldn't leave my wife or husband and I know I shouldn't swear, lie, and steal, and cheat, and flirt in the office. But, oh Lord, boys will be boys and girls will be girls.

The women of the world. But God, you're going to save me anyway because you're a loving God. That's mocking God.

See, you're mocking. You're saying, all this you're saying, I'm smarter than you guys. I know how to play the game.

I can do this and get by it. Hey, you're playing with the wrong guy. Do not be deceived.

Don't let deceit empty your mind. I think people, when I was in the ward there in Kaiser, there was a fellow next to me. He's going in for his third or fourth angioplasty.

And what does a man have in his head to go through for his third or fourth angioplasty? It's because they get the artery cleared up, but they don't change their way of living. And, well, somehow it won't happen. Kids do that, don't they? Don't you hate to see a young teenager starting off smoking? Don't you hate to see that? You know, and I hate to see anybody smoking because the research is such, hey, you're gonna reap that thing, buddy, in your stomach, or in your lungs, or in your heart, or somewhere else in your body.

You're gonna reap what you're doing. But you can't tell people that, can you? I mean, they could have research, they could have 15 volumes on the internet proving that cigarette smoking causes health problems. But it won't happen to me.

Isn't that what it boils down to? I'm not the one who'll get AIDS. All these other guys out here will get it. I'm not the who will get lung cancer, or throat cancer, or mouth cancer from chewing tobacco.

It's not gonna happen to me. You know, that's kind of living, what would you say, stupidly? Is that too harsh a term? That's stupid. You're gonna reap it.

If you don't do what you're supposed to, you're gonna reap it. I think we've got a thing in America that militates against that. Somehow it won't happen.

In more primitive cultures, everybody knows what's going on. But in ours, when somebody dies or something, it's all covered up and it's rushed off to the undertaker and so on. And we're not faced with the reality of death, and life, and tragedy.

It doesn't become a village thing that everybody sees and helps and learns from. It's all hidden. And the commercials proceed.

99, 99. But in the meanwhile, your son got AIDS, or your daughter's shackled up somewhere. But it's 99, 99.

Go on. We've got a bridge to the future. Yeah, but my child.

There's an unreality about it. It's happening to people. It will happen today.

But it goes on, you know. Spin the wheel. Somebody may win a million dollars.

It's like the crackling of thorns under a pot. That's, I think, one of the purposes of a church, is to get people out of the anonymity of California and the utopia. Get a community going where people care.

And then when somebody messes up somehow, there's a lot of people that know it, and a lot of people that pray, and a lot of people that help, and a lot of people learn from it. And we're not lost in the great currents of California where it goes on. It goes on.

99, 99. 99, 99. It's only 99, 99.

But in the meanwhile, your children run off. Your daughter becomes a lesbian. Your son's up somewhere.

We need to get real. How many are in favor of getting real? And not live in the fantasy of television. In our virtual reality, we're going to have a nation of zombies walking around mindless, their eyes like opium.

I mean, it's like opium. A religion is not the opiate of the people. It's the personal computer and the television.

Do not be deceived. God is not mocked. Well, that puts it on you.

Don't you allow yourself to be deceived. Be real. Say, wait a minute here.

Don't snow me anymore with this stuff that everything is great. The nation's going to hell in a handcart. I mean, we have anarchy in our major cities.

Anarchy. It goes on. Play the music.

Fiddlers on the run. But we don't have to be deceived. See, we don't have to be deceived.

That's a choice we make. I'll pretend it isn't so, until a hairy fist comes through your dead bone. It is so.

Do not be deceived. God is not mocked. For whatever a man sows, this he will reap.

There's no, that is one of the basic laws of the kingdom. And Jesus, grace and truth came to us by Jesus Christ. Not as an alternative to this law, but as the means of coping with it.

So, we're not so discouraged. God has said so many times, there's hope. Jesus said, there's hope for you.

Come to the cross. Get your sins washed away. But I'm not stopping there.

I put my spirit in you. And if you'll walk in it, you can overcome these things. What a difference there is between those two ways of looking at it.

One is more fantasy world. Unrealist Christian schizophrenia. But the other one is the reality of a new creation.

A transformed life. How many believe God came to make us new creations? Do you believe that? Not, not forgiven old creations, but new creations through the power of God. If you think he can't change, you go out and consider the mass and energy and space.

And then go to bed and get a good night's sleep. You, he's got the power to change little old you, if that's what you want. No, the kingdom of God is not a house of cards based on imputation.

It's real. It's real change and real people. We're experiencing that, aren't we? Do not be deceived.

God is not mocked. Whatever a man sows, he will reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption.

Now this has to do with the resurrection, which we hope to talk a little bit. If you sow your flesh, that means if you live in the appetite, eating, sleeping, working, playing, and reproducing the life of the horse and the life of the average person. We live in our five senses.

That's called living in the flesh. You say, well, I'm in the flesh. Of course you're in the flesh and you're a human being, but you need to spend some time in prayer, reading the Bible and listening to the voice of God.

How many believe that? That's when that's it. God knows that we need to eat, sleep, work, play, and reproduce. God understands that.

But if that's all we do, we might as well be a horse. God gave us the ability to tap into eternal life. We don't have to grovel in the mud.

We can dance among the stars. That's a choice we make. The weight on the Lord shall mount up with wings as eagles.

Hallelujah. We don't have to work three jobs and lose our health and our family and everything to make money, which we're going to leave anyway to people who will waste it. Brother, Solomon was troubled about that.

I do all this, I get all this, I'm going to leave it to somebody who doesn't appreciate it. So all is vanity. For one who sows, you're going to reap.

If you live the animal life, you're going to reap the animal life. And when you're resurrected, there'll be nothing there for you because you haven't laid up any treasures in heaven. This good old you comes forth unchanged.

Corruption. And the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life. Now that brings up a point.

Salvation or eternal life has a specific beginning in our life and it has a specific process and it has a specific conclusion. We have been saved. We are being saved.

We will be saved if we endure to the end. And to put it all at the beginning is to misunderstand the whole purpose of God. Salvation is not that you say, that's it and now I wait until I die and go to heaven.

Salvation is something that begins at a specific point but it continues every day. We work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Every day you're in a contest to keep what you were given supremely.

To keep your crown. And the powerful forces militating against that. It's an uphill climb.

You have to swim against the current. Or down you go into the flesh. And in the future, like it says here, you reap eternal life.

It's something given in the beginning. Something that you contest for every day. Death and life are fighting over you.

And then it's something that you reap at the end. Paul said to Timothy, lay hold on life. You have to lay hold on it today.

Your mind is all full of the world and trash and garbage. You're not laying hold on life. You have to lay hold on life by giving yourself to Jesus every day.

You don't worship God six days a week and cut out on one. Or vice versa. It's got to be all the time.

Because the moment you let up, the forces, the pressures moving in the wrong direction, it's great. You cannot remain static. It's a dynamic thing at every point.

And it's not impossible to live. I mean, it's a neat way to live for heaven's sake. The way to the sin, it's sin that's a hard way.

The way of the transgressor is hard. How come you think most of the commercials are on Mylana or Tagamet or whatever else they got out there to calm your nerves. Audrey and I were saying, you know, Abraham and Sarah, they didn't need Mylana.

Why? Because their life was low key compared to ours. And Southern California is the worst of the worst. It's like living in one of these cages they put a squirrel in.

That's the way we live it. It's like living in a squirrel cage. So you can't get out of it.

So what do you do? Did you have your Mylana this morning? If not, your stomach probably hurts. It's churning out too much acid. You get Tagamet to block it from going up into your esophagus.

Wonderful world we live in. It's great if you make it. But you have to have Mylana to help you along the way.

Your stomach is all the time pumping out acid because we're not, you know, stressed. But many that are last shall be first. The demands on us are tremendously tremendous.

But the goal, you know, the goal is to get there with God and to rule with the Lord and to get a better resurrection. Now, the one who sows to the Spirit, and you sow to the Spirit by praying, reading your Bible, listening for God. You know, our environment is frantic and it's noisy and you can't hear God.

Now, God is not that hard to hear. Sometime this afternoon, just stop the uproar. Get quiet somewhere and listen and you'll hear God's voice.

And it's not that hard to hear. Get sensitive to the Spirit. Don't rush around like something's driving you.

Living in the future. Mother, are we there yet? Standing stooped over after the airplane lands. Wait and walk out gracefully.

Let other people stand all stooped. Living in the future. Mother, are we there yet? You don't have to run around like that.

He that believes shall not make haste. Listen. And before you do something, check it out.

You know, you've got a friend in high places. Check it out with him. You become sensitive to his will.

He's there and you're just running around like a squirrel in a cage. Living in the future. Financial worries.

Other kind of things that are driving you. You can't add an inch to your stature doing that. Slow down and listen.

You'll hear the voice of the Lord. He's ready to talk to you, but you've got to get yourself in the position where you are quiet. The waters are shallow and they go quietly.

Even religious ambition will keep you from hearing the voice of God. Quiet down and listen. You'll be amazed.

The Lord talks to me. Yeah, you're no exception. I don't say that he speaks to everybody like it's coming over a cell phone.

I'm not saying that. There's people here in different ways, but you'll be conscious. You'll be conscious if you cultivate the presence of God and that's called living in the spirit.

Horses don't do that. They can't do it. All right.

Verse nine, and let us not lose heart in doing good. You feel like doing good this morning? You say, what's the use of doing good? Nobody appreciates it. For in due time we shall reap.

Reap. So you're sowing by your actions. When you forgive somebody, you're sowing.

When you lash back, you're sowing. When you speak well of someone instead of gossiping about them or slandering them, you're sowing. When you refuse to lie or steal, you're sowing.

You're sowing. You're doing good and you're sowing. And you're going to meet that later.

Okay, so now we're talking about, we know there's some things we reap in this life, but I want to speak about a larger picture and that's where we read this morning in 2 Corinthians 5. We know that if the earthly house, which is our body, which is what we're talking about, which is our house, is torn down, which merely means we die, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Now that's what I want to talk about is this house. So the resurrection actually involves two bodies.

The body that you have now will be raised from the dead. Make no mistake, it will be raised from the dead. But there is also a body being formed in heaven.

And when you are raised from the dead and your body stands on the ground, you will be clothed with that body. And that will be the fullest expression of sowing and reaping. And I want you to internalize that.

That is tremendously important. There will be other things. We like to think about paradise, that's fine, but there will be more than that.

There will be relationships with loved ones going on before, and new people, and as I said, proximity to God, and opportunities for service for eternity. So I'm not talking about the only thing you're going to reap. I'm just concentrating on one thing that you're going to reap.

Now most of us, if we had a chance to have any kind of body we wanted, that would be kind of neat, wouldn't it? Huh? The women that all want to look like Helen of Troy so that, you know how you can tell when Helen of Troy goes by? Yeah, read your Homer. The men on the wall are like this. The whole lineup of men on the wall when Helen walked by.

Helen of Troy. Well, you may have some other model that's more current. She's been dead for a while, but like would you believe 800 BC, but she's one of the great beauties of all time.

And if it's a man, perhaps you'd want to look like Hercules, Clark Gable, or whatever your thing is, you know, or somebody that's current. Of course, at my age, everything gets warped. You can't, I can't keep up with this generation.

I don't even understand it. But it'd be kind of neat, wouldn't it? If you could have the kind of body you want, pick it out, get it on the store. How much is this one? Well, that's exactly what's going on.

Exactly what's going on. You're building, you're working on a building, you're working on a body. And unlike our body in this world, which can be used to conceal what we are, that will reveal what you are.

Oh, that's cool, provided that you got the right stuff inside. You can't hide anymore. Now, how do we do this? You're being given decisions to make every day.

And every time you decide, it affects what you're going to be clothed with. You're going to reap exactly what you're sewing. Now, you say, well, my past life has been horrible! Well, God has given you something called the blood of Jesus, and you can wash your robe and make it white.

No matter how dirty it gets, you can wash it and make it white. That's what I meant by saying God has given us the leg up. But you can't play games with God.

You can't say, well, all right, this is neat. I'll just do my thing until I'm ready to die, and then I'll wash my robe. Hey, whoa.

Psalms 18 says, with the shrewd, he shows himself shrewd. Doesn't work like that. You can only repent as long as you have the gift of repentance.

And when that is lifted from you, there's no repentance possible. God doesn't play those games. If he sees that you have an honest and good heart, and you're like the drunk on the corner, and you beat your breast and say, God be merciful to me, a sinner, and God has mercy on you.

But if you go playing games with God, say, oh, that's neat. I get my robe filthy, and then the blood can cleanse it, so I'll wait until the last minute. Like that, you're out of here.

Heart failure. I mean, you drop on the spot. It isn't like angina.

It's just the old ticker, just quicksand. Down you go. You didn't have a chance.

So God is very real. He is not an equation that you can learn how to work. He's not like that.

He's not a formula. He's a person. And if you want to be pleasing to God, God's going to help you.

But if you try to work the moves, you're going to get hung up. Well, I guess the best way to find that out is to try it. So somebody stashes you in church, and you're so mad you go home, and you can't even eat, you're steamed.

That ever happen to you? Well, you have a decision to make, don't you? In that house up there is waiting for that decision, and you can fume around and get on the phone and try to split the church. That's one option. The other one is you can go to Christ in prayer and ask for help.

Dear God, I've got a flaming arrow stuck in my side, and it's burning me, and I'm mad. And the Lord will take it out and heal it. That's another option that you have.

Now, both of these options affect that house up there. If you decide to chew on this bone and cultivate your hurt, you're sending up unforgiveness. You're sending up corruption into that house.

Oh, but it won't happen to me. I can be as mean as I want to be, but I'm going to be clothed with a wonderful house. It'll show how beautiful I am.

I'm going to put Helena Troy in the shade. No, it doesn't work that way. Down on you is going to come this pickle.

If you're a witch inside, guess what you're going to look like? We're going to reap what we're sowing. Yeah, the Bible says. But if you say, and it kills you to do it, I forgive her.

I forgive her. Help! I don't want to forgive her, but I want to want to forgive her. Well, God hears that prayer too.

There's power. Go out at night. Look at the massive energy.

And have a good night's sleep. There's power in there. Power, power, power to get that devil out of you.

And when you do, guess what you're sending up? Hey, patience, godliness, trust in God, forgiveness. Give yourself to the appetites of the flesh. Live in the sewer.

I've written some on pornography as a result of an elders meeting we had. And I'm not going to dwell on this because it's garbage beyond garbage. I wrote, I went home and wrote on that.

People sitting in their virtual reality suits, slobbering slaves of demons, giving their money to the flesh merchants who laugh on their way to the bank while you go either to disease or prison or corruption. Pornography is terribly addictive. One glance at the pornography on the internet, you can get hooked.

It's worse than cocaine. It's a terrible thing. And the future, because of digital technology with the screens and compression and other things that are going on now that'll make the screen, what's going on the screen will be clearer than what's going on in your front room.

And then you enlarge that screen so it's as large as that thing over there. And then you're bringing into it pure pornography. You can sit there and watch it all night.

How do you think the people in America are going to handle that? And you put on your virtual reality suit so you're there? We've got some, I hope we've got some classes of psychiatrists coming up. We're going to need it. Because people are not going to be able to distinguish between reality and fantasy.

That's what's coming up. And what the Christians in our nation are going to have to get more iron than they've got. So that if you're on the internet and you happen to hit that thing and that filthy thing comes up, the iron comes up.

No! No! I will not become a prey of demons, these goblin creatures. When you see them, they won't be virtual reality then, they'll be real. We've got a big job to do in America.

We've got to get Christians to realize that they're going to reap what they're sowing. And if you sow pornography, you're going to reap pornography. It's going up there into that house.

You're going to be clothed with filth, corruption. He that sows the flesh shall reap corruption, written to Christians, written to Christians. There's never been an accessibility to sin as there is today.

That's what it says, because lawlessness shall abound, the love of many shall wax cool. We have no fear of the great tribulation. There's no problem there.

Tribulation will perfect you. The fear is of the hour of temptation. That is the thing to fear, and that is close to us.

And in America, one of the big gods is immorality. It's a big god in all of its many tentacles. We're calling in the demons from Haiti and Africa and South America and protecting them with the Bill of Rights and welcoming them.

And the air is saturated with it, and you cannot escape it in the flesh. You've got to have the power of God that has to hit you. It has to get down into you, into your spirit and into your nerves, or you will never be able to resist what's coming down the pike electronically.

Arm yourself now and recognize that if all that you're doing in your decisions is affecting that house, you're going to meet it someday, because you're going to be clothed and that's the perfect justice of God. There's nothing more just than that. The law of sowing and reaping is a perfectly just one.

But if you're a lover of the truth, you will love that law. Verse 2, for indeed in this house, this body, we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven. That's not our groaning.

We groan to go to heaven, and the reason for that is partly because of tradition and our teaching and our spiritual immaturity. But the goal is not to go to heaven, the goal is the house. It's the house with which you're going to be clothed.

The change is what's important. You don't want to go to paradise unchanged. No way.

So the good news is the change. Paradise will take care of itself. For indeed in this house, this body, we groan, we want to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven, we want to be clothed with that thing Paul is saying.

Why? Because he was a righteous Jew and he wanted to live righteously and he hated his body. And maybe he was old and tired. Everybody over 70's say amen.

Now, inasmuch as we haven't put it on, the thing is, you put it on. You put this thing on. Your body is raised from the dead, and then you put it on.

You put on this house. And then he says, so we'll be clothed with, so that that which is mortal, which is your body that will be raised, or if Jesus comes before you die, your present body, may be swallowed up by life. This body is a body of life.

Remember, if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap life. We're in the pursuit of life. Straight is the gate, narrow is the way that leads to life.

You say, well, I'm a Christian, so I have it. No, you're a Christian, so you're authorized to pursue it. Which the unsaved cannot do.

They cannot pursue life. That's the gift of God, is the authorization to pursue life. It's like the gift of a piano.

It can sit there in the front room and collect dust. I mean, you can play chopsticks now, and 30 years later you're still playing chopsticks. That's the way Christians are with eternal life.

Or you can play Chopin. And you know, chopsticks gets old after a while. After you hear it 25 times, it kind of palls on you.

Now, the gift of eternal life is not like the gift of a \$50 bill. It's like the gift of a piano. You have to practice it.

You have to discipline yourself to do anything with eternal life. Now, he who prepared us for this very purpose is God. God has to prepare us.

God had to prepare a place for us, then he has to prepare us for the place. Who gave to us the spirit as a pledge. That is, as a deposit on the spirit that is coming.

You don't have the whole thing. You've got a deposit on it. The rest of it's in the bank.

Therefore, being always of good courage and knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. We are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. Now, he's not talking about the house.

He's talking about his desire to die and to be with the Lord. Now, we get back to house a minute. Therefore, also we have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to him.

Now, he gets back to the house. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. And that word does not mean, as I've said so many times, it doesn't mean appear in the sense of stand.

The Greek term means appear in the sense of be made manifest. That's a better translation. For we must all be made manifest.

It's appear in the sense of made manifest, not geographical appearance, but a revelation of what you are. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body. Now, we could wish that God would weigh our intentions, our motives.

And I think some people do feel this way. They say, but yeah, it's true. I lie and I steal and I cheat and mess around.

But I have a good heart and God knows that. Don't you ever feel that way? God is looking on my heart. He knows I may tell lies, but God knows I'm not a liar.

I may fornicate, but God knows I'm not a fornicator. I may talk filthy stuff, but God knows I'm not a profane person. Have you ever felt like that? Hey kids, it won't wash.

There's what, what you do is a revelation of what's in your heart. And in the seven churches of Asia, there's one expression that is used, only one that is used to each of the seven churches. Do you know what it is? I know thy works.

God, if you've got something in your heart and God wants to judge it, he works circumstances until you do something. And then he judges what you do. He doesn't judge you according to your intentions.

Now that's important because we play, we kid ourselves. You know, there's people in prison that have murdered people and they're saying, I really am a good person. That's no joke.

That's we human beings are made. We don't, we're not honest with what we are. Now, if you want to know what you're really like, ask an unsaved person that knows you well.

A Christian may give you a lot of theology, but ask, ask, ask an unsaved person, someone you work with. See, what kind of a dude am I really? Now tell me the truth, Jack. Oh, shine me on.

I said, there's a reason I got to know. Well, you really want the truth. Yeah, lay it on me.

Then you go home crushed because people don't see us like we see ourselves. We see ourselves, Maurice, we're noble. I mean, we're a noble person, actually inside.

Honest, you want a person of integrity, ta-da, but you tell lies. Well, we don't have to mention that. I am really a very nice person.

Well, how come you snap back at people like you do? Backbite, gossip, do these things. Well, I really am a very nice person. God doesn't like that kind of stuff, believe me.

He knows the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, but we don't. We think, yeah, sure, it's true of all those other people, but not me. I am really a Gemini.

No, you're not. Your heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. Who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart.

I try the rings, even to give to every person the fruit of his doings. So what, the way God works with you is you sit there in your narcissistic state, perfectly pleased with yourself, looking all around in this globe that you've built up around yourself. I've learned all this stuff, you know, the hard way.

And then God says, well, it's time for them to grow. What do you say, angels, all these God's friends standing around, what do you think? Do you think she's ready? Do you think he's ready? Yeah, I think so. I think he can make it.

Well, I don't want to lose them. Well, you don't want them like this. That's true.

Let's go for it. What do we do? Well, have somebody tell a lie about them. Now listen to that.

We'll have somebody tell a lie about them. Okay, that's good. Down goes the messenger, goes into somebody's heart, and they tell a lie about you.

And then, of course, the angels work it, so it gets back to you, finally, that somebody told a lie about you. Oh, brother, the fat's in the fire. And here you were so saintly.

I mean, you were practicing, you know, the presence of God in your kitchen, and washing your pots and pans, and just waiting for the world to come to your door to feel the presence of God. But all of a sudden, things got un-ecclesiastical fast. They said, what? They thought that I would... Haven't you ever read about the things they said about Christ? It is God who justifies you.

He will bring forth your righteousness as the light. The more you talk, the more people will be absolutely positive. And they'll be going around, and he thinks they protest too much, you know.

People, your best friends, we love them anyway, but it's probably true. It could be true. I'm not sure.

It may be true. They may not be what they appear to be. Oh well, you know, life goes on.

I can't stand it. I must have a perfect testimony, or I will die on the spot. Out comes all the garbage for you to see.

God knew it was there, and so then you have to make a decision. And the decision that you make goes right up into that house. You're going to get, right now, you're determining what body you're going to get.

You have that wonderful opportunity to pick out the body you want. You said that's what you wanted to do. You wanted to have an opportunity to pick out the kind of body so you could look like Eleanor Troy, or Clark Gable, or Hercules, or Marilyn Monroe, or somebody else.

Well, you've got your chance. Here it is. You want, when that day comes, to come down a mountain of glory and righteousness.

Whoa! People look at that and say, that person, oh, they're so beautiful. They're so handsome. What a hunk! But you see, you built that by forgiving people, by being honest, by laying down your life, by being faithful to Christ.

You built that thing, and there it's yours forever. And you can walk around and show off a little bit. That's permitted.

Just don't overdo it. But if you don't, he's sending up backbiting, and gossip, and hatred, and lying, and stealing, and anger, and witchcraft, and drunkenness, and everything else. So what you've got up there is a bunch of rags.

Comes the day of judgment. You're when the guy ahead of you, whoa, and I'm next. Here I come.

I don't want to look. Surprise me. And you look around at people, and they're going, oh, don't get near me.

And you look down at yourself, corruption. Surprise, surprise. Did you never read Galatians 6? For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Shall we stand? The kingdom law of sowing and reaping. You want a better resurrection? The altar is open. Maybe we fingered something this morning that needs to be adjusted.

This is God's altar. This is your chance. You can come and wash your robes in the blood of Jesus, and make them whiter than the snow.

You say, but I'm a horrible person. Yeah, I know. Aren't we all? Join the group.

But Jesus is giving us a leg up. There's power here if you want to change. If you want to change, there's power in Jesus Christ.

Don't worry. If God has shown you something this morning, and it's not right, and you don't want to be clothed with it, you don't want that to be you, this is the time. God is speaking to his church.

I come here this morning, when I didn't know what I was going to preach, I thought, Lord, what am I going to do in front of these people? I don't have anything. David Cortier's out of a job. He was putting up the transparencies.

I'm not even getting this stuff enough in advance to get a transparency for David Cortier to put up. And I wait during the pre-service, and burden bearers all of a sudden tell the people about sowing and reaping. Just as clear as can be.

So we're talking about something that the church needs to know about. The church of today, the Christian church in America needs to know about the law of sowing and reaping. If something has hit you this morning, get yourself up here, and you make that right with God before you leave.

Never mind. It's important. You don't know if you're going to make it home.

There's more drunks out on the highway than you can shake a stick at. This may be it for you. And God will wash you and make you clean.

At least you'll be without guilt, and then you can begin working on your building, working on your house. Praise the Lord. Father, as we come unto you this morning, Lord God, we know from your unalterable Word that we are going to reap.

We are sowing. Father, help us. And if there be any among us, Lord, that have got their garments defiled and they're going to be clothed in the day of resurrection with something they don't want to be clothed with, we pray you will put it in their heart, Lord, to make that right in your sight, to wash their robe in the blood of Jesus, and to get God's Holy Spirit so in the future this behavior does not continue, but in its place is the godly opposite that will put courage and joy and righteousness and peace into that body with which they surely shall be clothed according to the Word of God.

So, Lord, we know it's a very serious message. We know it's a very necessary message for your church today. We pray, Lord, that we won't lose one person that will go out of this building not prepared, not prepared for the day of resurrection we ask and thank you, Lord, in Jesus' name.

We're going to work at the altar now. I think I would like to do that, since there's so many people, musicians, I think I'd like to work at the altar. If you give us a little background music and have the altar workers come forth.

We're being trained in altar work by Diane. Let's take advantage of it and come and help those at the altar. And the rest of you can stay and enjoy the presence of the Lord.

God bless you. You're dismissed as of now, but altar service. So feel free to stay and pray and enjoy the presence of the Lord.

And if you want to come up and stand here behind these and pray and give us a good atmosphere. And may the words ring in your heart. You may be clothed gloriously in the day of resurrection.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/11/SID11102.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/robert-b-thompson/sowing-reaping/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net