

Laws of the Spiritual Life #4 - the Law of Reaping

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes the spiritual law of reaping, highlighting the importance of sowing to the Spirit and the inevitable consequences of our actions before God.

Duration: 49:31

Scripture: Proverbs 25:2, Luke 2:46

Topics: "Spiritual Life"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of taking the preaching of the word of God seriously. He believes that every sermon he has ever preached will be revealed on a videotape in the future, not just the words spoken, but also the motives of the preacher's heart. The preacher references Ecclesiastes 8:11, explaining that the delay in punishment for evil deeds leads people to continue in sin. He encourages believers to have rehearsals of the judgment day, examining their lives and repenting of any sins, so that they may be prepared for that day.

Transcript

about some of the laws of spiritual life. In the first evening, you remember, we covered the subject of the law of wholeheartedness, where God says, if you seek me with all your heart, you will find me. And those who obey the laws get the benefit of them.

On the second day, we considered the law of humility. God gives grace to the humble. It's automatic, like water flowing down.

You don't have to pray for grace. If you humble yourself, it automatically comes. And if you don't humble yourself, if you are proud, doesn't matter what you are proud of, doesn't matter how many years you've been a believer, the moment you become proud, God becomes your enemy.

He opposes you. That's a law. It can't be changed.

It's like the law of gravity. It operates without any respect of persons. And those who submit to those laws get the benefit of those laws.

And yesterday we saw the law of faith. According to your faith, be it unto you. Not according to your desire, not according to God's desire.

Your desire may be very large. God's desire also may be very great for you. But we don't get according to desire.

We get according to our faith. And that's very very important. It's a law in the New Testament.

And that's the reason why many many people never get what God wants them to have, and which they may also want to have. Now, today I want to turn to another law which is found in Galatians 6. It's the law of reaping. This is another law of the spiritual life, and it works without any respect of persons, uniformly, everywhere, at all times, in every country.

Galatians 6 and verse 7 to 10. Do not be deceived. God is not mocked.

Whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption. But the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life.

And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we don't grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. So there is a law which, again, like I said in this matter of humility and pride, operates without any respect of persons.

The person who sows to the flesh may call himself a believer. It doesn't make a difference. If he sows to the flesh, he reaps corruption.

You know, sometimes we can think believers are put in a particular pigeonhole, and these laws don't operate for them. Even if they are proud, God will not oppose them. Even if they sow to the flesh, they will not reap corruption, because they are believers.

And we think that all these things are for unbelievers. And we think that if a believer is a believer, he will automatically be sowing to the Spirit. It's not true.

You know from your own life that's not true. And we've seen in the lives of many, many believers how they sow to the flesh, and they reap corruption. Now just like in the fields where a farmer sows his seed, he does not get a crop immediately.

He may sow a seed, and some seeds take a few weeks, months. If you are sowing, if you want coconuts and mangoes, you've got to wait a few years. If you want rice and wheat, it may be just a few months.

But all reaping takes time. There is no immediate result. You sow today, you can't get a crop tomorrow.

It takes time. It takes a long time. And in spiritual things, it takes years.

But the reaping will definitely come. That's certain. It's a law.

And the other thing about reaping is, one grain can come out with thirty, or sixty, or a hundred. You don't get just one grain. You get much more than you sowed.

And that applies whether you are sowing to the flesh, or sowing to the spirit. This principle. You don't get the harvest immediately.

And secondly, you get very much more than you sow. And this is the reason why many people continue sowing to the flesh. Because they think, well, nothing has happened so far.

It's like a farmer sowing weeds. Now, he's got to be a really mad farmer to go around sowing weeds in his garden. But let's assume there is some mad farmer, some believers are mad, they sow weeds, and nothing happens.

Nothing happens the next day, nothing happens the next month, nothing happens the next year. So they continue sowing weeds. Nothing happens for years.

But one day when the harvest comes, it's a hundred times. And it definitely comes. That's for sure.

I want to show you a verse in Ecclesiastes chapter 8, and verse 11. I don't know how many of you are familiar with this verse. It says in Ecclesiastes 8 verse 11, Because sentence or judgment or punishment against an evil deed is not executed by God quickly, therefore the hearts of men are given fully to do evil.

Very true word. The reason why men are sold out to do evil is because the punishment does not come immediately. If punishment came immediately, there would be a lot less sin in this world.

You know that? You know people say, I can't control my tongue. I lose my temper so quickly. But let's assume every time you got angry, your tongue got a little paralyzed.

And next time you got angry, it got paralyzed a little more. I tell you, you'll get victory over anger very quickly. You think you can't get it.

Because punishment doesn't come immediately, hearts are fully set to do evil. What about young men who say, I can't control my eyes, I just lust. If every time you lusted, your eye became a little blind.

And next time you lusted a little more blind, finally you completely lost vision in one eye. I tell you, you'll have no problem in that area. Why do you continue? Because the harvest takes a long time to come.

Because sentence against an evil work is not done immediately. Every time you signed a false statement of accounts, if your hand got a little paralyzed, you'd never sign another false statement of accounts again. It's true in every area of our life.

You can think of any sin. You think that you can't give it up. I've met believers who say, oh, this habit of smoking, I can't give up.

I mean, they claim to be believers. And I think some of them are. And then one day the doctor tells them that your lungs are so bad, another cigarette will reduce your life by six months.

And they suddenly get victory over smoking. How is that? The fear of death produced what the fear of God could not produce. That's it.

If a man could see the heart of a, his heart, when he comes out as a little baby, his heart would be red and pink. And then he starts smoking cigarettes and it gets grayer and grayer and blacker and blacker. If he could see it, he'd stop.

Now I want to apply that. I don't believe cigarette smoking is the worst sin. I think it's bad, evil.

I think bitterness and jealousy are a million times worse, just by the way. But if he could only see how just like cigarette smoking makes the lungs darker, darker, every cigarette makes the lungs darker, darker, darker. If you could only see how every time you sin, your heart becomes blacker, blacker, blacker.

If only you could see it. I tell you, you'd be much more careful about sin. But because the external symptoms of some of these things take a long time coming, people are careless.

Even in the matter of eating habits, you know, people can be very careless with their eating habits in their twenties, thirties, forties, fifties, and then when they get into their sixties, after twenty, thirty years, they're beginning to reap the consequences of eating such a lot of ghee and butter and all types of enjoyable foods without any self-control, and they begin to reap the consequences of it after twenty, thirty years. But it's too late to do anything about it because their blood vessels have thinned down and all types of fat has accumulated in their blood vessels. It's just too late.

And so doctors have discovered that and wise people begin to be careful when they're thirty. Now, apply this to our spiritual life. Is it possible that we have got habits in our life, the results of which will come out thirty years later? And there are doctors who say the reverse too, that if you have good eating habits and good exercise habits when you're twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, you're going to be healthy.

Can we apply the same spiritually too that twenty, thirty years later you can reap the benefits of sowing to the spirit? It's true. Much more true and much more important in our spiritual life than it is in our body. When we sow to the flesh, we are going to reap corruption one day or the other.

Don't forget that. We may go along a long time without it, but one day it will come. On earth there are courts, high courts and supreme courts, and in a country you can't go beyond the supreme court.

If they have passed a judgment, that's it. And it's possible because of human frailty and many other reasons for a man to escape punishment even at the supreme court level. It's possible for murderers to go free.

It's possible for crooks who have cheated the country of millions of rupees to escape punishment. But that doesn't mean they have escaped forever, because there is another court coming, the judgment seat of God, when all the books will be open. And if a man did not reap on earth, he will reap a tremendous harvest when he stands at the judgment seat of God.

Does that apply only to unbelievers? What about believers? Is there any judgment for believers? Let me turn you to 2 Corinthians chapter 5. He's talking about believers here in 2 Corinthians 5. He's talking about, you know, believers who leave the body and go to be with the Lord, and therefore we have as our ambition, whether we are at home in heaven or absent from heaven on earth, wherever we are, whether on heaven or on earth, we have one ambition, to please God. Why? Because we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. Everyone, do you know that every single one of us, you and I, are going to appear before the judgment seat of Christ? Why? So that each one may be recompensed, that means rewarded for good or bad, for the deeds that he did when he was in his body on earth, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

So it's not just a question of dying and going to heaven and that's it. No. There is a judgment seat of Christ at which every single one of us will stand.

And everything recorded in our, everything done in our life, which has been recorded in our memory from the day we were born, like a videotape constantly running, God just presses the rewind button, it goes back to the day we were born and the whole tape is played back. And we are going to be rewarded according to what we did in our body, whether good or bad. You know, believers are so taken up with the fact that our sins are all forgiven and by grace and we are going to heaven when we die, that they don't think of these things.

It's almost as though these verses are not in the Bible. But they are very true. When I was a young Christian, I read a piece of poetry which said, when I stand at the judgment seat of Christ and he shows me his plan for me, the plan of my life, the plan of my life, the plan of my life, as it might have been, if he had had his way, and I see how I stopped him here and I checked him there and I would not yield my will, will there be grief in my Saviour's eyes, grief, though he loves me still.

And it goes on to say in that poem how I stand there, stripped of everything but his grace. With my empty hands and my uncrowned head, I shall bow sorrowful, ashamed that in the one life God gave me on earth, I did not show my gratitude for Jesus dying for me on the cross. I spoke empty words of praise and worship to him in the meetings, but in daily life I sowed to the flesh.

I sang in the meetings, Jesus I love you, but I never heard his voice saying, if you love me, keep my commandments. It was only in the meetings that I expressed my love, not in daily life. And then I will see what a wonderful life I could have lived on earth, if I had not lived like other carnal believers around me, if I had not followed bad examples, if I had not followed bad role models of Christian workers, if I had steadfastly kept my eyes on Jesus and walked the way he walked of self-denial and taking up the cross, if I had followed the examples of men like the Apostle Paul and other godly men through the generations, how I could stand that day with joy.

There will be such tremendous regret, sorrow, because I can never live my life again. God gives us one chance to prove our life, our love for him, and the days are slipping by. We get one day at a time.

He doesn't force us, but he tells us, what you sow, you will reap. You have the choice now. It's no use regretting at harvest time.

It's no use praying at harvest time. Think of a man, a farmer who was careless and who sowed nothing or who sowed weeds at harvest time, and other people are reaping a fantastic crop, tomatoes and potatoes, and if he fasts and prays, nothing is going to happen. He is going to get weeds, plenty of them, because it's a law.

You can't change it. It's a law. And it doesn't matter if that believer, if that farmer was a believer.

If he sows weeds, he gets weeds. That's how it is. How will it be when you stand at the judgment seat of Christ? I have many times encouraged believers to have a dress rehearsal for that final judgment seat.

You know what a dress rehearsal is? If people are staging a drama, they have many rehearsals, dress rehearsals, where they actually act out the whole play and see if everything is going smoothly before the final day when they present the drama to the public. In the same way, before we finally stand at the judgment seat of Christ, we can have a dress rehearsal now. It's very easy.

Just sit down quietly sometime when you have a little free time and shut your eyes and imagine that Jesus has come and He has set up His judgment seat and He is calling the believers one by one and finally He

calls your name and you stand before Him. I am telling you how to have a real dress rehearsal. And you stand there and you imagine He has called your name and the Lord says, play the videotape of His life and on the screen for everyone to see, from the day you were born, your life is played back.

And the years of sin which you confessed and repented of, which are cleansed in the blood of Christ, are blotted out, it's not on the videotape, forgiven. And you are thankful that the blood of Jesus has cleansed you. All that record of your unconverted life is blotted out.

It's blank. And then it starts from the day you were born again. And how you spent your days, it's going to be seen.

How you spent your time, what you read, what all thoughts you indulged in, how you spent your money and how you spent the Lord's money. You know, there can be a difference. People are very careful with their money, but not so careful with the Lord's money.

It's another account. It should actually be the other way around. You should be more careful with the Lord's money than with our money.

You should be careful with both. How we spent our money, how we spent the Lord's money, how we spent our time and right through our life, how we treated other people, whether we treated them the way we wanted others to treat us, what we sat in our homes and talked about other people, all the gossip. Jesus said, what you whisper in the ears will be proclaimed in the housetops.

That's going to be on that day. Every idle word you spoke, Jesus said, in the day of judgment you have to give an account. I am convinced that 99% of believers don't believe that what I am saying is true.

They think it's all fairy tales. It's exactly like the devil told Eve, you won't die, implying God is so good, nothing will happen, don't worry, just eat it. And she ate it and discovered that God keeps His word and threw her out of the garden.

God keeps His word, my brothers and sisters. You know, you may have had mothers when you were small who frightened you with stories to make you eat your food, I'll give you to the police or give you to the beggar woman and things like that. And as you grew up you discovered it was all just to scare you.

And you think God is also like that. That when God says, I'll do that, oh, I heard these stories when I was a little child. My mother used to frighten me like that.

Now this preacher comes and frightens us saying that we are going to give an account in the day of judgment. You think it's a tale? Heaven and earth will pass away. God's word will never pass away.

Your mother's stories may have been lies, but not God's word. I believe it. And even the Apostle Paul says, therefore, because this is true that we shall give an account at the judgment seat of Christ, therefore we have an, on our side he says in verse 9 of 2 Corinthians 5, we have an ambition to please only God.

And on, in terms of my ministry, he says in verse 11, therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men. We try our best to persuade men. But some won't be persuaded.

Some don't believe there's going to be a harvest. What to do? Well, then we just leave them alone. Take it seriously, my brothers and sisters.

I believe that every sermon I ever preached in my life in the last 40 years will come back in the videotape. And in that day when you see, you will not hear only the words. It will be an amazing videotape which reveals the motives of my heart as well, which ordinary videotapes cannot record.

And you'll be able to see there the motive with which every preacher preached, with which every man prayed and sang solos and everything else, whether they did it for their own honor, whether they did it to make money, whether they did it as a profession, or whether they did it because they loved God and loved people. It will all be manifest. 1 Corinthians 4, 5 says the hidden things of darkness will be manifest.

The secrets of men's hearts, the motives of men's hearts will all be revealed. And in that day we will discover who was a real servant of the Lord and who was not. How many of you fear God? How many of you want a rehearsal of that judgment seat so that you are prepared for that day? Good schools have a model examination before the final examination.

And the more model examinations you have, the better the final examination becomes. So I encourage believers to have many rehearsals of that judgment day and see if there is anything in your life which you need to repent of and be cleansed of. Now I agree that if you repent of a sin even after you are born again, that gets blotted out.

You say, well, thank God. But what is the result? It will be like years and years of a blank videotape. Nothing done for the Lord.

It's like a farmer who sowed nothing. He also reaps nothing. So the mere fact that my sins are blotted out and my failures are blotted out doesn't solve the problem.

Have I sown to the Spirit? Now this applies on the other side too. If we sow to the Spirit, we are told in Galatians 6, we shall reap eternal life. Now many people know only of Romans 6.23 which speaks of the gift of God is eternal life.

I would encourage you to take a concordance and read what the Bible says about eternal life. And you will find Romans 6.23 is not the only verse. 1 Timothy 6.23 says that the Lord is born again long, long ago to lay hold of eternal life.

Fight the good fight. Lay hold of eternal life. Here it speaks about reaping eternal life if you sow to the Spirit.

Why is it we love Romans 6.23? Because we think of a gift. Why don't we love Galatians 6.8 which speaks about reaping eternal life? You compare scripture with scripture if you want the full truth. If you take one scripture by itself, you get a wrong teaching.

All the cults measure on one verse. Take it out of its context. Don't compare it with other scriptures and get a doctrine.

The devil quoted one verse to Jesus. Jesus quoted another verse and balanced it out. So don't think of Romans 6.23 alone when you think of eternal life.

Think of Galatians 6.8 as well and then you get the full truth. When we sow to the Spirit, that means you respond to the promptings of the Spirit. The Spirit speaks to us.

When God created man, He made one part of him of the dust of the earth and He breathed into him a spirit. And when we are born again, we still have that flesh that pulls us down but we also have the Holy Spirit pulling us up. And in the moment of temptation, we hear the voice of the flesh pulling us down and the voice of the Spirit saying, don't yield to that.

And every time you respond to the voice of the Spirit and you ask God for grace to obey the voice of the Spirit, you are sowing to the Spirit and you will reap eternal life. It says in 2 Timothy 2, let me read you this verse. In verse 6 and 7, the hard-working farmer should be the first to receive his share of the crops.

You would all agree. If you have ten farmers, who should receive the first share of the crops? The most hard-working among them. And who should get it last or nothing? The lazy farmer.

Verse 7, he says, consider what I have just said and the Lord will give you understanding in everything. Think about this. The hard-working farmer should get his first share of the crops.

Paul tells Timothy, think about this. And he tells him further down in verse 15, therefore, be diligent like that hard-working farmer to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling the word of truth accurately. If you want to know how to handle God's word accurately, it says here you got to be diligent.

God never blesses laziness. God told Adam, by the sweat of your brow you will earn your bread. He's never encouraged laziness right from the first day.

The hard-working farmer gets the best share of the crops. Because he's sowing to the Spirit, because he's diligent, God rewards him. Hebrews 11.6 in the King James Version, it says, God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Diligence, persistence. That's how we come to know God. That's how we come to know His word.

It says in Proverbs 25 and verse 2, it is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but it's the glory of kings to search out that matter which God has concealed. And that refers to scripture. There are many things that are concealed in scripture.

In fact what you see on the surface of scripture are the less valuable things. The really valuable things are concealed. It's like the earth.

What you see on the surface of the earth is mud and grass. If you go to the depths of the earth you get gold and diamonds and precious things. It's the same way with the word.

There are many things you get on the surface, but there are many more valuable things you get deep down. And it's the glory of God to conceal these things. And if you're a king, in Christ you're a king, it's the glory of a king to search it out.

And thereby God tests who is diligent to study it. Jesus knew the scriptures by the age of twelve. And He never had a Bible at home.

There were no printed Bibles those days. All He could hear was when He went to school and on the Sabbath day in the synagogue, but He listened so carefully that by the age of twelve He knew the scriptures. And the result was that when Satan quoted scriptures to Him and when He was tempted by Satan, He had a verse for every temptation.

He could say it's written. I believe there is an answer in this book to every problem we can ever face in life. That's what I've discovered in forty years.

And if you know where to find it. And that can come only by diligence. I thank God that He drove me to the scriptures early in life.

And I want to say to those of you who are unmarried, this is the time to study the word. You won't have as much time when you're married. Do you want to be diligent to present yourself? Do you want to present yourself as a workman approved to God? Then be diligent.

Don't waste your days. Don't waste your time. Carry a New Testament with you wherever you go.

Those hours that you spend in bus stops where everybody is looking around here and there, you can spend reading the scriptures. Those hours you waste in government offices waiting to see somebody, you can study the scriptures. The hours you spend traveling in a train, you can read the scriptures.

You can read the scriptures anywhere. There are many, many places, there are many, many bits of time we can get here and there where we can read and meditate on God's word. And when God sees you got a hunger, He reveals those things He has concealed because He sees you are a king who wants to search it out.

It's a great sorrow to me that there are so many people in Christendom today who have so much spare time and who don't spend it studying the scriptures. It's possible that God wanted to have many prophets in this country. I believe that, that God loves India, and it cannot be possible that for a land of one thousand million people that God would have no prophets.

That's impossible. There's a verse in the Psalms which says that it's when God doesn't love, when God forsakes a people, that there is, He doesn't send them a prophet. It's somewhere here in Psalm 75 or 76 somewhere.

I don't remember where it is right now. But there is no prophet in our midst, He says. God loves India.

God planned to have prophets, but many of them have fallen away, marrying the wrong person, or going after money, or not studying the word and getting to know God. It's possible that some of you, God may have a plan to make you His mouthpiece in this land in the days to come, but you can never be that. That plan of God will not be automatically fulfilled in your life if you are not diligent to accurately divide the word, to study the word.

It only comes by diligence. And if you are diligent, then this word will not only provide you the answers to your problems, but will make you rich to help others wherever you go. And God will be able to speak His word through your mouth, if your mind is saturated with His word.

It's true, if you think of a businessman's mind, it's saturated with ways to make money. His mind is working day and night in that way, that he can immediately think of so many things. And many times when I have seen such businessmen, I have said, Lord, that man worships money, and I worship the true God.

His worship of money should not be more zealous and more devoted than my worship of the true God. I hope the zeal of businessmen to make money challenges you to serve God diligently. When we are diligent, persevering, hardworking, disciplined, diligence involves discipline.

It means cutting out unnecessary things. I mentioned earlier that we are not under law. We don't live by rules and regulations.

But what's happened to many Christians is that in throwing away all laws, they have become undisciplined. They have no discipline in their life. They are not disciplined in eating, they are not disciplined in studying the word, they are not disciplined in their conversation, they have no discipline in their tongue, they just say, I'm forgiven, I'm filled with the Spirit, I'm going to heaven.

You cannot become a holy man if you are not disciplined. The Bible says, God has given us, 2 Timothy 1.7, the spirit of discipline. Jesus was a disciplined person.

He got up early morning and got alone with the Father. He who never sinned. He was disciplined in his life.

He cared for people and spent time with them. He was disciplined. In every area, Paul was a disciplined man.

He kept his body under subjection. That's how he became the mighty apostle that he became. He sowed to the Spirit and reaped eternal life.

Today we have a generation of Christians who are undisciplined, lazy and want these shortcuts to spiritual success. Go to some meeting, get an experience, get thrown down, start laughing and imagine that everything is going to go well. There is no shortcut.

There is no experience that will guarantee that you will become spiritual. An experience can start you off. It's like the ignition that starts a scooter or a car.

Good, but you got to keep going. That engine has to keep firing and firing and firing and firing and firing continuously for that vehicle to move forward. You know that? That spark plug doesn't just start once and that's it.

It has to keep on firing continuously to keep going. And that's what many Christians have been deceived into believing is not true. Satan is a master at urging believers to have instant holiness, instant sanctification, instant power.

Because we live in a world of instant coffee and instant tea. It's not like the old days where it took so long, instant noodles and instant this and instant that, and we carried over into the Christian life, think that we're going to become instant prophets and instant preachers. It's not like that.

In the Christian life there is no instant. It's the way of the farmer. You sow and sow and water and over a period of years there is fruit.

Think of what it says in James concerning Elijah. It says, Elijah was a man of like passions, like us, James chapter 5, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain. And it didn't rain for three and a half years.

And he prayed again. And we know from 1 Kings 18, he prayed and he sent his servant, do you see any rain, any cloud? No. He prayed again, sent his servant again.

No. He prayed and prayed. And it says he prayed seven times.

He would have prayed seventy times if he hadn't seen the cloud. He prayed until the rain fell and the earth produced fruit. Do you know that once when Elijah went before God and said, Lord, I alone am left, in 1 Kings chapter 19, when he was discouraged, do you know what God told him? Elijah, I have got seven thousand people in Israel who have not bowed the knee to Baal.

Well, thank God there were seven thousand people in Israel who were not idolaters, who still believed in Jehovah. You read in 1 Kings chapter 18 about one of those men who was a man called Obadiah, not the prophet, another man. But he was a manager in Ahab's palace.

These seven thousand people were not idol worshippers, but they were compromisers. But on Mount Carmel, all those seven thousand people could not bring the fire down. There was only one man who could bring the fire down.

There was only one man who could turn Israel to God, not those seven thousand people. And it's the same in Christendom today. There may be seven thousand people who say they speak in tongues and go for meetings and praise and worship and all that, but they cannot bring the fire of God down.

For that you need an Elijah. For that you need a John the Baptist. For that you need a man who is disciplined to live before God's face, who has secret dealings with God, and who is diligent, who cleanses out from his life everything that displeases God, and who sows to the Spirit day after day after day, gets to know God, faithful in trials, faithful not to murmur or complain, faithful to be content with the material provisions that God gives him, faithful with the money he uses, his money and the Lord's money, faithful with the way he spends his time.

And over years of sowing in that type of faithfulness, God picks up one Elijah. The other seven thousand people, their testimony is negative. We did not bow the knee to Be.

A lot of Christians, their testimony is only negative. I don't go to the cinema, I don't drink, I don't smoke, I don't dance, I don't fool around with girls, I don't gamble, I don't watch dirty television programs, I don't read pornography, and I don't bow the knee to Be, I don't do all these things. What do you do? Well, I sleep, I get up, I eat, I go and earn my living.

What do you do for God? We will discover in the final day that many missionaries have sacrificed so much to serve the Lord, and it will not be counted in terms of the number of people they brought to the Lord. Their reward will be according to their sacrifice, years of sacrifice. I have often thought, in many places where I have gone and seen a harvest, I have been reminded of what the Lord had said to His disciples, I sent you to reap where you did not labor, other people labored.

In many parts of Tamil Nadu, where we have seen great harvests, I think of missionaries who came hundred years ago, two hundred, one hundred and fifty years ago, who labored there under such difficult circumstances and conditions, labored. Their reward is going to be very much greater, even though they didn't see much result. They sowed and sowed and sowed to the Spirit.

I remember hearing of a young couple who went to China more than fifty years ago, before the Communists took over. A young couple from the United States who asked to be posted in some remote area near Tibet, where the Gospel had never gone, and they went there and worked for seven years and never saw one soul converted. Then they got a little baby girl born to them and that little baby girl learned little choruses in the local language and went around sharing that with others, and others like that, those

other Tibetan children, learned these choruses and they got one family converted.

After another fourteen years, they got eight souls. Twenty-one years for eight souls. And then one day, the father discovered a patch on the daughter's hand, took the long journey by road to Shanghai, to the coast, took her to the doctor and found that she had got leprosy, and she had to be sent on the ship back to the United States with the mother for treatment, and he did not go back.

Another brother met him at that time and said, Why aren't you also going back? He said, There are eight souls there. It will be difficult for them to stand true to the Lord. I have to go back.

If some new person goes there, it will take a long, it will take years before they have confidence in him. It wasn't easy, but he went back. One day when we stand before the Lord, we will hear many such stories.

So many believers, who have so little, have given so much. And so many other believers, who have so much, have given so little. I keep challenged.

I challenge myself by reminding myself of these missionary stories I have read, and I hang my head in shame, and I say, Lord, I have done nothing. Help me to use the remaining years of my life to do something for You, to show my love for You. Help me to sow to the Spirit, not to waste my time, not to waste my life, not to waste my money.

As long as You give me health, Lord help me to serve You in the way You want me to, without compromise, without lowering your standards, and never offering to You that which costs me nothing. That's what David said. That's sowing to the Spirit.

Sacrifice. David said in 2 Samuel 24, 24, I will never offer to God that which costs me nothing. This is true Christianity.

Don't get taken up with all these things going on these days, people having exciting experiences and all. This is all a calligraphy. The real thing is what these men of God through the years have experienced.

There is hardly a book written nowadays which I can read by Christians. Most of them are shallow, empty. I go back to the books written fifty, sixty years ago, godly men, or at least thirty, forty years ago.

All these modern western Christian writers are shallow, hollow, empty. Don't waste your time reading them. Read the missionary biographies of godly men who experienced genuine a walk in the Spirit, and that will lead you to spend your life in a worthwhile way.

Dear brothers and sisters, remember this law of reaping. What you sow, you will reap. Let's not get discouraged.

Let's press on, following the footsteps of people like Paul who suffered so much, and one day we will reap, if we don't give up. Let's pray. It's easy in a moment like this to respond emotionally, but you must respond with your will.

You must choose to say, Lord, I want to follow you. I want to give my whole life to live for you and to serve you in such a way that I have no regret when I see you face to face. By and by we will see him face to face, and we will wish we had given him more of our lives.

Heavenly Father, help us to live in the light of that final day even now. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

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