

Galatians 6:6-10

Introduction

A story of feeding the wrong plant: Little Shop of Horrors

Paul: the Flesh and Spirit are like two plants that you can feed

The Passage

I. The basic agricultural metaphor (v. 7)

A. Growth is inevitable

The plant that comes up is always of the same type as the seed planted

B. Growth is gradual

Plants don't grow overnight, it takes time, and there are seasons of growth

C. Examples

1. Physical: if you exercise 5 days and eat well you will gradually but inevitably get in shape

2. Relational: if you listen, serve, love people well you will gradually but inevitably develop meaningful friendships

II. The agricultural metaphor applied to our spiritual growth

A. Sowing to the flesh

1. The flesh = the selfish/self-centered part of us that doesn't want to surrender control to God

2. Sowing to flesh = making decisions that cultivate that selfish part of us

a. Examples: Cultivating a grudge, cultivating our anxiety

b. We are supposed to "crucify the flesh" (5:24) not cultivate it

3. Sowing to the flesh reaps "corruption/destruction"

A plant that is decayed and rotting thing that ends up withering

5:19-20: the results of the flesh

5:21: the ultimate destiny of the flesh (not eternal life in God's kingdom)

It's gradual but inevitable

B. Sowing to the Spirit

1. The Spirit = God's personal presence and power living inside us

2. Sowing to the Spirit = making decision in line with the Spirit

a. Inviting God into the different areas of our lives to take control and living for others rather than ourselves

b. Examples: spending time in God's Word, in prayer, serving each other

3. Sowing to the Spirit reaps "eternal life"

A quality of life that begins now (5:22-23) and goes on into eternity

It's gradual but inevitable

C. Paul is saying something significant about authentic faith

Authentic faith is not just about praying a prayer at some point in your life. It's about how you live your life every day.

III. Paul's warning: Don't be deceived (v. 7)

A. God will not be mocked

1. We attempt to mock God when we claim to possess his Spirit and then willfully and consistently sow to the flesh
2. But God won't be mocked because He has hard-wired a principle into reality: you reap what you sow

B. Examples

1. Some Christians think they can spend their time however they want (not spending time in the Word or in prayer) but over time that life catches up with them and they feel distant and disconnected from God (they are reaping what they sow).
2. Some Christians think they can watch whatever I want, but over time their mind is filled with impure thoughts that they can't escape (they are reaping what they sow).

IV. Paul's encouragement: Don't give up (v. 9-10)

A. Since growth is gradual we need to be reminded not to give up

1. Farming takes hard work and patience
2. We live in an instant society and we have a hard time with anything that takes time

B. The harvest will come "at the proper time"

1. That timing may be much later in life than we want
2. That timing may not be until Christ returns

C. Examples

1. If you're spending time in the Word and prayer and it doesn't seem to be bearing fruit, don't give up. Keep on doing good.
2. If you're living according to the Lord's values in the midst of a culture that has different values and it's difficult on you, don't give up
The harvest is gradual, but it's inevitable

V. Applying these principles to the issue of money

A. Why is this passage about money?

1. The immediate context (v. 6)
Paul's encouraging the Galatians to support their pastors/elders
2. Language of sowing and reaping
Paul uses this language elsewhere to refer to financial support (see 1 Cor 9:11 and 2 Cor 9:6-11)

B. The situation in Galatia

The Galatians had stopped supporting their pastors/elders because times were tough or they figured they already knew the Word well enough, so they started spending all their money on themselves. So Paul is encouraging them to use their money to sow to the Spirit or they will reap what they sow. And the fact that they are now buying into false teaching which is causing factions and quarrels is evidence that they are reaping what they sowed.

C. Us today

1. Money is a key area in which we sow to the flesh or sow to the Spirit
 - a. The flesh says, "Mine. I earned this money, I can spend it however I want."

- b. The Spirit says, “Yours, Lord. You gave me this money to use for your purposes in the world.”
2. We need to hear Paul’s warning: “Don’t be deceived”
We’re easily deceived into thinking that money will provide us with happiness, security, and significance.
We’re easily deceived into thinking that as Christians we can spend money however we want and it won’t have any effect on our spiritual lives..
But we reap what we sow: “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Our hearts follow our treasures, and if we spend all our money on ourselves we end up with very shallow/hallow spiritual lives
3. We need to hear Paul’s encouragement: “Don’t give up.”
Times are so hard right now and being generous may cause lifestyle decisions for us, so we need to be reminded to keep on going and not give up being generous

Conclusion

We are gardeners sowing seed, and we reap what we sow

The harvest is gradual but it is inevitable, so let’s sow to the Spirit not the flesh

Discussion Questions

1. Opening questions: What struck you most about the sermon/the passage? What surprised you? What confused you? What did you disagree with?
2. In light of this passage, discuss the following statement: our eternal future depends not simply on whether we prayed a prayer at some point in our life but rather on how we live our lives every day.
3. Explain in your own words what Paul means when he says “God cannot be mocked” (v. 7).
4. In what area of your life do you need to hear Paul’s warning: “Do not be deceived?” (v.7) That is, where are you tempted to sow to the flesh without realizing that you will eventually reap what you are sowing?
5. In what area of your life do you need to hear Paul’s encouragement: “Don’t give up?” That is, where do you need encouragement to keep sowing to the Spirit even when it is challenging and difficult?