

Galatians 6:7-10

⁷ Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow. ⁸ If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit. ⁹ So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. ¹⁰ So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.

I want to start today with a meditation from a book called Hazelnuts from Julian of Norwich: Meditations on Divine Love. Julian of Norwich was a person who lived seven hundred ago, during the period when the Plague swept through England three times. Norwich, a city in England, was particularly hard hit; half of the population died from the Plague. Yet, she found the love of God is everywhere, and said, **"All will be well, since God is holding the world, even amid pestilence."** Her insight about the love of God holding us is still applicable during our own pandemic.



Julian listened to God when she saw a small hazelnut. Above is a picture of a hazelnut. What do you see? Listen to Julian's voice. "The Spirit showed me a tiny thing the size of a hazelnut, as round as a ball and so small I could hold it in the palm of my hand. I looked at it in my mind's eye and wondered, 'What is this?' The answer came to me: 'This is everything that has been made. This is all Creation.' It was so small that I marveled it could endure; such a tiny thing seemed likely to fall into nothingness simply. Again, the answer came to my thoughts; 'It lasts, and it will always last because God loved it. **Everything -all that exists - draws it's being from God's love.**'"

What does it mean, these words, "All creation in a small hazelnut"? Does it mean that it was created to last eternally, or that it was created to multiply? It sounds something more deeper. What do you see? Do you see a seed that is seemingly trivial, but has a love of God, and that has a secret of abundant multiplication within it, along with God's tender and creative wisdom? Surely, from a hazelnut, a tree will come and produce thousands and thousands of hazelnuts in the future. The secret of the whole world in the hazelnut! What does it all mean? Before we talk about this further, let's find the universal truth of sowing and reaping.

1

Today, our scripture, **Galatians 6:7 (NIV) "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows."** gives us a powerfully dynamic principle of life, which is a Rule of the universe. Whatever one sows, this he will reap. Listen to the sentences whether it sounds correct or not. If you sow pumpkins, you will reap watermelons. Is this right? If you wish for a flower strongly, you will reap flower. Is this correct? **If you want a flower, you should sow a flower seed.** Nature always sends us spiritual laws hidden in there.

The Bible shows this rule from the beginning to the end. Adam and Eve sowed the seeds of rebellion and the whole history of humanity had to harvest the fruit of rebellion and suffering, instead of love and abundance. And God's gracious intervention was and is with us.

On the other hand, this principle greatly encourages us to try creating what we want. What do you need in your life? Do you need forgiveness? Then, live the life of forgiveness. Forgiveness will be given to you. Or do you wish to have an abundant life? Spread the seed of generosity. Do you need kindness? How do you create that small heaven? By truly being kind to others! This principle of life lets us manage our life in the way of God. We want to have control over our lives; yes, we can control that seeds with the help of the Holy Spirit. All positive and negative energy of the heart multiplies and expands. It never simply disappears!

Thankfully, the power of God in us; God's DNA is in us. Therefore, **it is not too difficult to break the habits of the "old man" inside us,** who spread the negative seeds around. So far as you continuously nourish your seeds with water, light, the correct temperature, and air.

There is one thing to remember and that is how and when you will have the produce of what you've sown. Everything has a different germination periods and harvest times. But if you continue to give the seeds the proper condition to grow, surely amazing things will happen. First, it will start to grow; then, until it yields a harvest, farmers have to wait for spring rain and the summer heat, until the fruits are ripe. Surely you will reap in autumn. All seed you sow will return.

Let's take an example. In our lives, there is a thing that we can create in a brief moment. Smile and say a kind word! Your words create a space that is filled with kindness and warmth. Your heart and words create something—the whole energy of the air changes. And you will receive kindness in return. When you have a grateful heart, the whole energy field changes. And it will become a window where God's blessings flow in.

Sometimes it can take a long time; you might need to wait even ten years to be an accomplished pianist. Musicians! How many years did you sow the seed of practice? Even though you are a musical genius, without sowing the seeds of practice, you can never be a musician at all.



Here is the story of Sundar Singh, who was a saint from India - and whom I love. He was a person like the Dalai Lama in the 20th Century. This is about a personal experience he once had.

He was going over the Himalayan mountains with a guide. In the high mountains, the weather got cold abruptly. He thought he might die from the cold. On the way, he found a man who fell on the snow, but was not yet entirely dead. Sundar talked to his own guide. "Let's help him!" The guide said that if we take him, we will all die before arriving at a village. Then, guide just passed by the fallen man. But Sundar took the man on his back, trying to cover himself and the man with a blanket, as much as possible. Sundar then started to walk. It was a painful walk, climbing the mountain with the heavy man on his back. It was challenging. And

the snow fell. On the way, Sundar found the guide, who had walked ahead alone, fallen in the snow. The village was visible far away. The man on his back lived; Sundar lived. They safely arrived at the town. This is the way we survive in our human lives. **Nobody can live without the help of others; when we help others, we help ourselves.**

2

There is one more rule about those seeds. **It is the rule of multiplication.** When you sow one tiny apple seed in the ground, it will grow and grow, and become a big tree. You harvest hundreds of apples, and inside of the apples, you have thousands of seeds. And each of the thousands of seeds will yield another hundred apples. And inside those seeds are another thousand. The way of multiplication is powerful and dynamic. If we sow good seeds, they will multiply hundreds and thousands of times. And the cycle is infinite. The scale of blessing shows God's heart. How much God wants to bless us!

Our scripture **v. 8 says, "Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit, will reap eternal life."** What we sow in our life never disappears. This truth is also visible in other cultures and religions. The positive or negative cycle of energy always increases in the rule of multiplication.

It helps us to understand the justice system in the old Hammurabi code; "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot." It was a justice cause because the violence done to others always escalates even to murder. The Hammurabi code forbids the escalation of the violence.

Now we can break the vicious cycle of life because Jesus paid upon the cross. Jesus paid the cost of our sins. Through the death of Jesus, the "old man" inside us was removed, and the inner man, a holy-man, created in the image of God, awakened. Still, the shadow of the "old man, false self" is in us. It is not too powerful. Still, it is real - but not truly real. We just need to be aware of it. We are all the planters of seed; all seeds are in us. Holy Spirit helps us find our identity as children of God, and live the life of the highest standard of God, by producing the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

When we are consciously aware of the process, it is still very mysterious. In us, there is our identity as children of God, and we receive the light and nourishment of God as Jesus said in John 15, "I am the vine, you are the branches." We are part of God. We are in God; God is in us. Once we enter the cycle of love in the Holy Spirit, we are in an overflowing and fluctuating rhythm of love.

Our inner man awakens, the holy person in us mingles with the Holy Spirit; it is then that we are in the flow of grace. It is not sure who is doing the giving, who is doing the receiving. To be in that flow, we need the continuous rhythm of the Holy Spirit, nourishing ourselves with water, light, right temperature. It is the way we sow the seeds of the Holy Spirit, and reap the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

It will protect us and let us grow. In the Word, in prayer, in quiet awareness of self, and choosing the life continuously, our Holy Spirit will guide us until we have this mysterious life that God has prepared for us all - the life of resurrection. The harvest is beyond the rule of multiplication.

If the hazelnut has the whole universe and is eternal, then our life must have the entire universe and eternal too! Even more significant than that: We have God in us.