

Do You Believe In The Harvest?



DISCOVERING GOD'S WORD

Bible Study Series

Do You Believe In The Harvest?

Study Number: 187

Watch the free video or listen to the audio of this study @ www.godsaidso.com/dgw187

Bible study material by Eric Krieg

About the author: My name is Eric Krieg. I am a disciple of Jesus, a Bible student, a truth seeker, and an evangelist. My interest is in using the Bible as my only guide in my faith. My desire is to help others understand the message of the Bible and pursue true, New Testament Christianity.

Copyright: Copyright © 2017 by Eric Krieg. Please use this material to God's glory and honor. Feel free to copy and distribute this material in any way that will bring God glory and help souls to be saved. However, you may not take any of the material out of context or change the material in any way. Please provide the author with the proper credit for the material.

Scripture quotations: Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture quotations are taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

My plea: It is my hope and prayer that you are searching for the truth that is contained in God's word, the Bible. My desire is to help you understand and obey these truths God has revealed in the pages of His word. It is to that end that I write this material. Please observe all of the Scripture references and evaluate whether the conclusions I have drawn are in harmony with God's word. If they are, I ask that you make honest application of those truths to your life and obey God's instructions.

**FIND MORE FROM THE DISCOVERING GOD'S WORD BIBLE STUDY SERIES AND
OTHER FREE BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL @ WWW.GODSAIDSO.COM**

Do You Believe In The Harvest?

How much do you trust in the laws of sowing and reaping? As you set out to plant a garden in the spring of the year, do you really trust that there will be a harvest in the fall? How much do you really trust this to be true? Would you trust your life – or your family’s lives – to these laws of nature?

Psalm 126 reads: “When the Lord brought back the captivity of Zion, We were like those who dream. Then our mouth was filled with laughter, And our tongue with singing. Then they said among the nations, ‘The Lord has done great things for them.’ The Lord has done great things for us, And we are glad. Bring back our captivity, O Lord, As the streams in the South. Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy. He who continually goes forth weeping, Bearing seed for sowing, Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, Bringing his sheaves with him.”

Consider the following illustration I found to be extremely helpful in understanding what the Psalmist indicates whenever he speaks of those who sow in tears reaping in joy. This illustration references an individual’s experience as he visited the Sahel (a vast stretch of savanna more than six hundred miles wide just under the Sahara Desert).

“In the Sahel, all the moisture comes in a four month period: May, June, July, and August. After

that, not a drop of rain falls for eight months. The ground cracks from dryness and so do your hands and feet. The winds of the Sahara pick up the dust and throw it thousands of feet into the air. It then comes slowly drifting across West Africa as a fine grit. It gets inside your mouth. It gets inside your watch and stops it. The year’s food, of course, must all be grown in those four months. People grow sorghum or milo in small fields.

October and November...these are beautiful months. The granaries are full – the harvest has come. People sing and dance. They eat two meals a day. The sorghum is ground between two stones to make flour and then a mush with the consistency of yesterday’s Cream of Wheat. The sticky mush is eaten hot; they roll it into little balls between their fingers, drop it into a bit of sauce and then pop it into their mouths. The meal lies heavy on their stomachs so they can sleep.

December comes, and the granaries start to recede. Many families omit the morning meal. Certainly by January not one family in fifty is still eating two meals a day. By February, the evening meal diminishes. The meal shrinks even more during March and children succumb to sickness. You don’t stay well on half a meal a day. April is the month that haunts my memory. In it you hear the babies crying in the twilight. Most of the days are passed with only an evening cup of gruel.

Then, inevitably, it happens. A six-or-seven-year-old boy comes running to his father one day with sudden excitement. ‘Daddy! Daddy! We’ve got grain!’ he shouts. ‘Son, you know we haven’t had grain for weeks.’ ‘Yes, we have!’ the boy insists. ‘Out in the hut where we keep the goats – there’s a leather sack hanging up on the wall – I reached up and put my hand down in there – Daddy, there’s grain in there! Give it to Mommy so she can make flour, and tonight our tummies can sleep!’

The father stands motionless. ‘Son, we can’t do that,’ he softly explains. ‘That’s next year’s seed grain. It’s the only thing between us and starvation. We’re waiting for the rains, and then we must use it.’ The rains finally arrive in May, and when they do the boy watches as his father takes the sack from the wall and does the most unreasonable thing imaginable. Instead of feeding his desperately weakened family, he

goes to the field and with tears streaming down his face, he takes the precious seed and throws it away. He scatters it in the dirt! Why? Because he believes in the harvest.” [Leadership, 1983.
<http://www.sermonillustrations.com/a-z/e/evangelism.htm>, accessed September 17, 2014].

Think about this great lesson today! The seed is his. He owns it. He can do anything with it he wants. The act of sowing hurts so much that he cries. Yet, because of his trust that there will be a harvest, he is willing to do even what some might consider to be unreasonable!

So, how much do you believe in the harvest? No, not just a harvest that impacts your physical life; rather, how much do you believe in a harvest on a spiritual level? Galatians 6:7-10 teaches about such a harvest: “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.”

So, there are spiritual laws of sowing and reaping that are just as true as the physical laws of sowing and reaping (if not more so). In this lesson, we will not be focused on the laws of sowing and reaping concerning the flesh (though significant points could be made about the eternal punishment God has prepared for those who fail to obey His commandments, see 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9). Instead, we will be focused on the laws of sowing and reaping as applicable to the things of the Spirit.

The purpose of this study is to help us have faith in the promise of God for a spiritual harvest – and to be inspired to sow (even when it is inconvenient, costly, and painful).

Sowing To The Spirit

You need to commit yourself to sowing to the Spirit. But, in order to be effective in your work, you

need to understand what this means and learn how you can accomplish it.

What it means to sow to the Spirit

Galatians 6:8 refers to sowing to the Spirit. But, what exactly does it mean to sow to the Spirit? Notice that sowing to the Spirit is contrasted with sowing to the flesh. This fact can be observed from Galatians 6:8. Notice also how the flesh and the Spirit are contrasted in Galatians 5:17: “For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.”

The one who sows to the flesh follows the leadings of the flesh (his/her own fleshly desires). However, the one who sows to the Spirit follows the leadings of the Spirit of God (who leads and directs through His inspired message, which is contained in the pages of the Bible). This individual, therefore, focuses on submitting his life to the instructions of God rather than fulfilling the desires of his own flesh!

Quite obviously, the flesh and the Spirit lead to two very different places. First, from a physical perspective, the life of an individual who sows to the flesh will be quite different from the one who sows to the Spirit. Galatians 5:19-23 helps to see this difference.

Galatians 5:19-21 identifies the sorts of things that will be produced in the life of an individual who sows to the flesh: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and similar things.

Then, Galatians 5:22-23 identifies the sorts of things that will be produced in the life of an individual who sows to the Spirit: Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Second, the flesh and the Spirit lead us to two very different places for eternity (after our lives on this earth are over). Galatians 6:8 helps us to understand this difference: “For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.” So, living your life in fulfillment of your own fleshly desires will result in eternal punishment in

Hell. However, living your life in harmony with the will of God will result in eternal reward in Heaven.

Sowing to the Spirit

So, now that you realize the very different outcomes produced by sowing either to the flesh or to the Spirit, I hope that you will make the determination to sow to the Spirit (so that you can reap everlasting life). But, what does sowing to the Spirit really look like?

As I have already mentioned, in a general sense, it is living your life in submission to the will of God (as revealed by the Holy Spirit in the pages of the Bible). So, you must search the Scriptures in order to understand what the will of the Lord is – and so that you can apply it to your life! But, let's focus on just a few things in particular that God has instructed of you – and that is involved in sowing to the Spirit.

(1) Become a Christian. Being obedient to the will of God (as revealed by the Spirit of God) begins at this point. Although you cannot earn your salvation by your works (Ephesians 2:8-9), there are some things God has commanded you to do in order to become a Christian (James 2:14-26).

First, hearing the word of God is necessary in order to develop saving faith (Romans 10:17). Second, God requires that you believe in Him and in His Son, who died so that your sins could be forgiven (John 8:24). Third, God commands you to repent of your sins by determining that you have sinned, looking upon your past sins with abhorrence, and determining to live your life for the Lord in the future (Acts 17:30). Fourth, God requires that you confess the Lord Jesus with your mouth (Romans 10:9-10; an example of which is given in Acts 8:37). Finally, God commands you to be baptized (immersed) in water for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:20-21).

After being sincerely obedient to these commandments, you are added to the church of Christ (Acts 2:41, 47). However, if you have never been obedient to these commandments in order to become a child of God, you are still living in your sins – and you are failing to sow to the Spirit!

(2) Study and meditate on God's word. Indeed, hearing God's word is a requirement to become a Christian (as we've just discussed). That is,

you must hear enough of God's word to be convicted of your sin, learn about the great sacrifice Jesus Christ made on the cross for you, and learn what He requires you to do in order to be saved.

However, even after you have heard this from God's word, there is still much to learn. Therefore, there must be a commitment that is made to continually learn more of God's word throughout your life. Psalm 119:97-104 is helpful to learn about the value of continual study and meditation upon the word of God. Studying and meditating on God's word is one way of sowing to the Spirit.

(3) Put on the characteristics identified in 2 Peter 1:5-7. In addition to learning more of God's word, there are some characteristics God expects you to add to your life after becoming a Christian. 2 Peter 1:5-7 identifies some of these characteristics as: Faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. Working to cultivate each one of these qualities in your life is another way of sowing to the Spirit.

(4) Pray. God expects His people to pray. In 1 Thessalonians 5:17, Paul simply instructed the brethren to "pray without ceasing." Prayer is the God-given avenue through which His people can directly communicate to Him, expressing their praise, thanks, concerns, need for forgiveness, etc. So, taking the time and putting forth the effort involved in prayer is another way that you can sow to the Spirit.

(5) Worship. Though prayer is an avenue through which you can worship God, worship is, generally, a way in which you can sow to the Spirit. In John 4:23-24, Jesus expresses that the Father (God) is seeking those who will worship Him in spirit and in truth. So, your worship is something that God desires and seeks. However, you must be careful to understand that He does not desire just any attempt to be made to worship Him. Instead, only worship that is in spirit (heart-felt, sincere) and in truth (in harmony with His instructions) will help you sow to the Spirit.

(6) Serve your fellow man. Christians are called by the gospel to serve others. Jesus taught that His disciples are expected to serve others in John 13:14-17, by His own willingness to serve His disciples. Galatians 5:13 instructs you to serve other Christians through love. James 1:27 demonstrates that

pure and undefiled religion before God is not complete without your willingness to visit the orphans and widows, which is a form of serving them. Therefore, serving your fellow man (as demonstrated by Jesus in the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37) is a way for you to sow to the Spirit.

(7) Give to the work of the local church – and to others. Christians, as members of local churches, are expected to financially contribute to the God-given work of the local church on the first day of the week. 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 identifies this responsibility: “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.”

In addition, Christians have the responsibility to do good to all mankind as they have the opportunity to do so – and especially to those who are Christians (Galatians 6:10). This “giving” could be financial – or it could simply be giving of your time or other resources. Giving (according to the instructions in these and similar passages) is yet another way you can sow to the Spirit.

(8) Encourage others. Christians are expected to be encouragers. An encourager is not someone who tells others whatever makes them feel good. Instead, a true encourager is someone who conducts his/her life in a way that will build others up spiritually. Specifically, Christians are instructed to encourage their brethren on a daily basis. Hebrews 3:12-13 says, “Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called ‘Today,’ lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.” So, being an encouragement to others is a way you can sow to the Spirit.

(9) Teach the gospel to others. Ever since Jesus commissioned His disciples to “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15), it has been the responsibility of God’s people to spread His saving message.

Romans 10:13-18 demonstrates how those who need to be saved are also in need of someone to tell them the saving message of the gospel – by indicating that they cannot call on the name of the

Lord if they do not believe in Him, they cannot believe in Him unless they hear about Him, they cannot hear about Him unless someone preaches the gospel to them, and the preachers cannot preach without being sent! Realize, then, the need that those around you have for you to tell them the saving message of the gospel!

Furthermore, 2 Timothy 2:24-26 gives Christians the responsibility to attempt to correct those who are in opposition to God so that they can come to their senses and escape the trap of the devil (having been taken captive by him to do his will). Therefore, teaching the gospel to those who are lost is one way you can sow to the Spirit.

Everyone ought to be doing these things!

Take a moment to reflect on this list. If you want to sow to the Spirit, these are some of the things you must be doing. Of course, we have not explored every aspect that is involved in sowing to the Spirit. So, you must be diligent in studying the Bible so that you can discover more of what sowing to the Spirit should look like in your life!

The Cost Of Sowing

Sowing to the Spirit is not always going to be easy. In fact, there is great cost involved in it. And, you need to recognize the cost so that you can determine whether you are willing to sacrifice in this way.

There is cost in sowing to the Spirit

Just as in the illustration given at the beginning of the lesson, there is cost in sowing to the Spirit! Quite simply, God does not want us to follow Him only when it is easy or convenient for us. But, He even wants us to follow Him when it costs us something! Consider the noble attitude of King David regarding His sacrifice to the Lord in 2 Samuel 24:24: “Then the king said to Araunah, ‘No, but I will surely buy it from you for a price; nor will I offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God with that which costs me nothing.’ So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.”

David had been offered everything he needed for his sacrifice to God – for free. However, he recognized that such would not really be a sacrifice! So, he determined to buy the necessary things for a price – and then make his sacrifice to God! This example, then, is an excellent example to help you recognize that sacrifices will necessarily be made when you follow God and sow to the Spirit!

Sowing in tears

Remember that Psalm 126 talks about sowing in tears. In order to truly rejoice in the time of harvest, we must be willing to sow in tears! For a few moments, please consider some sacrifices that will need to be made in order to sow to the Spirit (i.e. in order to do the sorts of things we have been discussing – becoming a Christian, serving others, worshiping God, teaching others, etc.).

(1) Sacrifice of time. Ephesians 5:16 instructs us to be “redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” To “redeem” time means to make the best use of it, to buy it up. So, we must be determined to make the best use of our time in the service of our Lord.

Certainly, it will take time to truly be devoted to the Lord and do the things He requires us to do. Then, we must understand that when we give time to God, time will necessarily be taken away from other things. In order to sow to the Spirit, you will have to make sacrifices of your time.

(2) Denial of self and the pursuits of this life. In Luke 9:23, Jesus said, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.” Galatians 5:24 states, “And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”

Clearly, when you determine to sow to the Spirit, you will have to deny yourself of many fleshly things (because the ways of the flesh are contrary to the ways of the Spirit). But, this will take determination and commitment – and will not always be easy! However, you must remember that your life is not about the things of this life – but, that your life is about serving the Lord (see Galatians 2:20).

2 Timothy 2:4 uses the illustration of a soldier who is engaged in warfare, saying, “No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a

soldier.” So, living a life as a Christian (who is engaged in a spiritual war) will require denial of self and the pursuits of this life in order to do the things we have discussed – and other things God requires of you.

(3) Forsaking others. Following Jesus Christ will cost you some relationships! Consider what Jesus taught in Luke 14:26: “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.” Jesus also made the same points in Matthew 10:34-39.

Simply put, whenever you take firm stands for the gospel of Christ you will be alienated from many people (perhaps even from some individuals you have had close relationships with in the past) – because they do not want to accept the truth of the gospel! Certainly, being alienated from those you love dearly will result in many tears as you sow to the Spirit.

(4) Persecution. The Scriptures plainly teach that persecution will come to those who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus. Consider the following passages.

2 Timothy 3:12: “Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.”

2 Timothy 2:3: “You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.”

Matthew 5:10-12: “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

John 15:18-21 also explains why persecution will come to those who do the will of God. It is because the world hates the ways of God (because it is contrary to God's ways)! So, the world hates those who follow and proclaim God's ways – just as it hated Jesus Christ. Therefore, if you dedicate yourself to sowing to the Spirit, tears resulting from persecution (which can come in many different forms) will be involved.

Sowing to the Spirit will not always be easy!

When Jesus spoke of the broad path that leads to destruction and the narrow path that leads to eternal life in Matthew 7:13-14, He said that the narrow way is “difficult” – and there are few who will walk on it.

Sowing to the Spirit, then, will be a test of determination and commitment! You must not just sow to the Spirit whenever it is easy or convenient for you! Instead, you must determine to sow to the Spirit at all times! But, why? Why sacrifice? Why endure hardships? Why not live to please yourself?

In order to dedicate yourself to sowing to the Spirit (even when it results in tears), you will need to have complete confidence in God’s promise for the harvest!

The Joy Of Reaping

While there is cost associated with sowing to the Spirit, there will also be a time of joyous reaping if you do not give up! And, it is the joy of reaping that will make the cost of sowing seem insignificant!

Joyous reaping during this life

Whenever you dedicate yourself to sowing to the Spirit there will be spiritual fruit that is produced during this life. Galatians 5:22-23 identifies the “fruit” (results) of sowing to the Spirit: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.”

So, as you dedicate yourself to sowing to the Spirit, you can see the fruits of: Your own spiritual growth, the spiritual growth of others you have helped, conversions to Christ through your efforts, heavy hearts being strengthened through the encouragement you have provided, etc. These (and other) forms of reaping ought to cause you to rejoice – and help you to realize that the tears involved in sowing were not in vain!

Joyous reaping in the life to come

While there will be moments of joyous reaping during this life, the primary and greatest rejoicing will come when this life is over – as you spend eternity with God in Heaven. Remember, this is the promise we observed in Galatians 6:8: “For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.”

Listen to the promises given through the pen of Peter to those who are Christians, concerning their “living hope” in 1 Peter 1:3-9: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith —the salvation of your souls.”

The understanding of this glorious hope is what prompted the apostle Paul to say the following as he considered the sufferings he experienced in sowing to the Spirit during his life: “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:18).

Indeed, one of the things that makes this hope so glorious is the assurance that no one can separate you from God (according to Romans 8:31-39). The text explains that no persecutions, no trials of life, no threats of death, no earthly rulers, or any other created thing can separate you from the love of God “which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

So, no matter how many struggles you may have throughout the course of your lifetime, nothing and nobody is so powerful that they can separate you

from God (not even Satan himself)! The only one who can cause a separation from God is you! Therefore, the Scriptures warn that it is possible to live in such a way so as to fall from the grace of God and be eternally lost (Galatians 5:4) – and encourage you to keep yourself in the love of God (Jude 1:21) by remaining faithful to God throughout your life (Revelation 2:10)!

In order to experience the joy of reaping...

As we have seen, there is tremendous joy that results from reaping of the Spirit! However, in order to experience the joy of reaping, you must first experience the tears of sowing.

Just as an individual who wants the view from a mountaintop must first complete the grueling task of climbing the mountain.... Just as an individual who desires to be a successful business owner has to put in the hard work to achieve that goal.... So it is with your Christian life! If you want the joy of reaping from the Spirit (according to the promises that are made and the blessings provided through Jesus Christ), you must first put in the work and make the necessary sacrifices that are involved in sowing to the Spirit.

Consider what Paul said in Romans 8:16-17: “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs — heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.” Did you catch it? Look back at the verse and see the connection between being children of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ if (a condition for receiving the blessings) we are willing to suffer with Christ!

Sadly, so many want the pleasure without the pain, the joy without the sacrifice, and the accomplishment without the work! This is true from both a physical and a spiritual perspective! Matthew 19:16-22 records an example of such an individual.

This man (from all indications in the text) was a good man who desired to have eternal life – and asked Jesus what he needed to do in order to have this eternal life. However, when Jesus instructed, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come follow Me” (verse 21), notice the man’s

response in verse 22. “But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.” He simply wanted the blessings of Heaven – without all of the sacrifice that comes with living life for the Lord!

Furthermore, you should also know that if you want to experience the joy of reaping, you must not give up! Notice Galatians 6 again – this time verses 9 and 10. “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.”

You must finish the race and keep the faith in order to receive that crown of life (2 Timothy 4:6-8)! In order to do this, there must necessarily be self-denial and sacrifice that comes from sowing to the Spirit (1 Corinthians 9:24-27). Know that if you are steadfast, immovable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord your labor will not be in vain (1 Corinthians 15:58)!

Conclusion

Don’t give up! Endure the hardships! Look to the prize! Be encouraged by the words written in Hebrews 12:1-4: “Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.”

Only after you have been diligent in sowing to the Spirit will you be given the reward of eternal life in Heaven (through the grace of God). Listen to Jesus’ words of encouragement to the persecuted Christians in Smyrna: “Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days.

Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life” (Revelation 2:10).

So, do you really believe in the harvest? If you do, you will be committed to sowing to the Spirit – fully trusting that God will provide the harvest. If you do not, you will not be willing to dedicate your full efforts to sowing to the Spirit (though you may make some partial attempts).

While I have not said much in this lesson about sowing to the flesh, the same principles we have established about sowing to the Spirit are true about sowing to the flesh. Galatians 6:8 makes it plain that there will also be a harvest for those who have sown to the flesh during their lives. However, the harvest will be everlasting condemnation in Hell fire (“corruption”) rather than everlasting life in Heaven!

So, which will it be for you: Eternal life or eternal corruption? God has given you the opportunity to be saved from your sins and spend eternity in Heaven; but, how you live your life will determine where you will spend your eternity. You will reap what you have sown! So, do you *really* believe in the harvest?

Study Questions

Discuss the concept of sowing in tears.

1. Sowing To The Spirit

What does it mean to sow to the Spirit?

How can you sow to the Spirit?

**Identify some specific points that are involved in sowing to the Spirit:*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

2. The Cost Of Sowing

Is there any cost involved in sowing to the Spirit?

Explain how you will sow in tears when you live your life for God.

**Discuss each of the following specific areas of sacrifice.*

1. Sacrifice of time –
2. Denial of self and the pursuits of this life –
3. Forsaking others –
4. Persecution –

Will sowing to the Spirit be easy?

3. The Joy Of Reaping

Explain how you will joyously reap during this life if you sow to the Spirit?

Explain how you will joyously reap in the life to come if you sow to the Spirit?

What must be done in order to experience the joy of reaping?

***Do you really believe in the harvest?**