



April 13, 2025, Palm Sunday
"You Reap What You Sow"

Sunday school at 9:30, Service at 10:30

News:

Wednesday Night Classes 6:30-8:00

Resurrection Sunday next week ~ Open House 9:00, Service 10:30

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If we truly allow God's love to animate us, we can set and enforce appropriate relationship boundaries without getting upset...

Because those boundaries are not set for our benefit...

We are to seek and accept help in the "bearing of our burden," not so someone else carries it for us, but so we can eventually carry it ourselves.

When we get our load under control we can help bear the burden of others.

GALATIANS 6:6 ~ The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him.

You are to allow God to love your pastor through your support. (Luke 10:7, I Corinthians 9:9-14, II Corinthians 11:8, I Timothy 5:18, as a principle in Romans 15:27).

Pastors have one job – enable the sheep to thrive (Acts 20:28). It is to feed and protect, which is to pray and teach... the reason for Deacons (Acts 6:4).

Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate, or the prayer/suggestion box in the entryway, or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.

God Bless You!

The single greatest threat to the church has always been false teachers.

Taught/teaches is κατηχέω (kā-tā-χě-ō) ... The ability to echo what came down from the teacher.

“Those who can, do; those who can’t, teach.” Really?

GALATIANS 6:7 ~ Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a person sows, this he will also reap.

It is a command, don’t deceive yourself, God cannot and will not be mocked. He will never allow you to reap anything other than what you sow.

GALATIANS 6:8 ~ For the one who sows to his own flesh will reap destruction from the flesh, but the one who sows to the Spirit will reap eternal life from the Spirit.

“Destruction,” is what is fleetingly temporary. Take your resources and spend them on what is temporary, and they are gone. Spend them on what is eternal, and the harvest lasts forever (I Corinthians 3:13–15).

GALATIANS 6:9 ~ Let’s not become discouraged in doing good, for in due time we will reap, if we do not become weary.

Patiently trust God. Trust that He will soon enough set all things right. Your sacrifices made for Him will be rewarded. Do you truly believe that?

GALATIANS 6:10 ~ So then, while we have opportunity, let’s do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

Like we said last week, sow while there is still time to plant because one day the planting season will be over and there will be nothing left but to harvest what you planted.

Write a brief note – detach and place in the offering, or the prayer box, or give it to a Deacon or Elder.

Name _____ Address _____
Phone _____ Email _____

Galatians 6:6–10, 6The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him. 7Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a person sows, this he will also reap. 8For the one who sows to his own flesh will reap destruction from the flesh, but the one who sows to the Spirit will reap eternal life from the Spirit. 9Let's not become discouraged in doing good, for in due time we will reap, if we do not become weary. 10So then, while we have opportunity, let's do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

Remember we were commanded in chapter 5 to take our freedom in Christ and use it to enslave ourselves to love.

We are to use our freedom from legalism – our freedom from earning brownie points with God – our freedom from a performance-based acceptance... to shackle and subjugate ourselves to the “Law of Christ” – to the allowing of the Holy Spirit to share God's love with others through us – to obedience of Jesus' command to “love one another,” thereby proving that we are His followers.

In chapter 6, we get some specific examples of what it means to be enslaved to love. Verse 1 talked about the spiritual correctors allowing Christ's love to flow through them to those caught in wrongdoing in the form of discipline.

Verse 2 talked about the rest of the church family allowing Christ's love to flow through them to the disciplined brother or sister in the form of comfort and encouragement. It then expanded the scope of that to include the bearing of all kinds of burdens that your brothers and sisters might have as allowing Christ's love to flow through you to them in the form of patient, kind, gentle, and caring support. The actual doing good to your family members in Christ as a member of the family.

Verses 3-5 cautioned us against the relationship killer which is "thinking too highly" of ourselves. We get upset when we think that we have been wronged, and we think that we have been wronged when we "think too highly" of ourselves.

If we truly allow God's love to animate us, we can set and enforce appropriate relationship boundaries without getting upset... Because those boundaries

are not set for our benefit, in order to protect our feelings and preserve our pride... They are set to benefit the other person whom we love in order to keep them from acting inappropriately. To protect them from their own prideful misconduct and sin as it directly relates to and involves us.

See what I mean? If I set a boundary – let's say one where I won't allow you to talk to me in a demeaning way. And I set it because I believe that I deserve to be treated with dignity and respect, then the boundary is all about me and if you violate it, I will become upset.

This is how the world encourages boundaries. The basis of setting fleshly boundaries is having enough self-love that we are willing to risk disappointing, angering, or even losing, others.

That's the opposite of God's economy – the opposite of Agapê. If, on the other hand, I set the exact same boundary, this time, because I know that you demeaning me is bad for you. Then I can enforce the boundary without ever getting upset because it's about protecting you from you, not about protecting me from you.

That's loving you. That must be the true motivation and when it is, you win, God wins, the church wins, and even I win.

Finally, we learned that at the end of the day there is a severe warning to those who would abuse the kindness and generosity of the Body by always being the center of attention by always being the one who has a burden that they need to share.

Even though the church is here to help you carry your load, it is still your load. Ultimately you will bear your own load before the Divine Word of Almighty God. That means that we are to seek and accept help in the "bearing of our burden," not so someone else carries it all for us, but so we can have help to get a handle on our load and eventually carry it ourselves.

The goal is that we would get our own load under control to the point that we can help others carry their load and bear their burden for a while, so that they can do likewise. The Peterson quote is definitely food for thought and while he has a human purpose, his principle is actually valid, if we change

the purpose to honoring God and growing in the faith.

Christians shouldn't shy away from burdens as though they were strange anomalies, we should embrace them as the God-ordained crucible through which our faith is strengthened, and our Godly character is further developed.

Here, in verse 6, Paul brings up another specific example of how we are to allow the Holy Spirit to love through us and, I've got to tell you, it is not an example that I would bring up. It's an example that God has brought it up.

You, my friends, each and every one of you, are to allow God to love... your pastor through your proper, reasonable, actually obligatory, and generous support.

As a command from God, you are to share all good things with your pastor. I did not write it, and I certainly did not inspire the man who did.

There are some who interpret this verse in a way to diminish support for pastors, particularly financial

support and I will tell you that it is a twisting of Scripture to advance a non-biblical agenda. There is not a single decent Biblical scholar who isn't certain that direct support, primarily financial, from the church to their pastor is what is intended here. You don't have to believe me or them, but there's no legitimate way around it Biblically (Luke 10:7, I Corinthians 9:9-14, II Corinthians 11:8, I Timothy 5:18, as a principle, Romans 15:27).

I won't waste a lot of time on the technical details, but the teacher in this passage is without any question the pastor. The one who leads through teaching. Sometimes called a teaching elder, and sometimes called an overseer, and sometimes called a shepherd.

Pastor is the Latin derived word related to pasture and pastoral that means shepherd. God is the shepherd in the Old Testament as in Psalm 23, "The Lord is my shepherd." In the New Testament it is revealed that Jesus is the Shepherd and that He appoints Spirit-filled men to shepherd His flock in His physical absence.

In Acts 20:28 Paul gives instructions to a group of pastors, “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.”

Pastors really only have a single job – enable the sheep to thrive. That job boils down to feeding the sheep and protecting them. Moving from the analogy to reality both of those tasks are accomplished by teaching the people the Word.

The entire reason that Deacons were appointed to help with the administration of the church was to free the pastor to “devote themselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word” (Acts 6:4).

The pastor has always functioned as the leading elder, as the teaching elder, as the overseer, as the shepherd, working for the True Shepherd, guiding, leading, mentoring, discipling, disciplining, and teaching, the portion of Jesus’ flock, that He has assigned to them.

The single greatest threat to Christians and to Christianity has always been false teaching and so,

false teachers. Precisely the problem Paul was combatting with this Letter and why he stressed the teaching aspect here.

The way a Christian knows what is false is by learning from a true teacher what is true. A true teacher teaches the Word. A true pastor teaches through prayer and the ministry of the Word.

The Greek participle form of κατηχέω (kā-tā-χě-ō), literally means coming down from and so, according to, the echo... It's a sound that is then repeated as an echo of the original sound cascading down. It is the ability for a learner to echo what the teacher has taught them.

This was the Greek conception of the teacher/learner relationship... that the student would follow the master until they were conformed to the master. Plato followed Socrates as his disciplined disciple until he could perfectly echo Socrates. Only then, was Plato able to add to his master's philosophy and make it his own. Plato's student Aristotle did exactly the same.

κατηχέω gives us our technical term catechism, which is the content of our Christian doctrine – the teaching that defines Christianity. It is generally organized in the form of questions and answers.

The catechist, or learner, correctly echoes the answers to the questions that they have been taught by their teacher. The word κατηχέω is used twice in verse 6. You who are taught the Word, κατηχούμενος (kā-tā-χū-mě-nōs), and the one who teaches you the Word, κατηχοῦντι (kā-tā-χün-tē).

The Bible makes it very clear that teachers are far more valuable than is typically demonstrated by modern Westerners. There are a number of reasons for that, but the primary reason is well captured in the George Bernard Shaw quote, “Those who can, do; those who can’t, teach.”

Shaw was a radical communist, atheist, and humanist who was self-educated. Like so many people who educate themselves, he saw teachers as irrelevant, dispensable, unnecessary, and often detrimental third-party mediators of learning.

Shaw's quote was a corruption of Aristotle's quote showing how far humanism had evolved. The diminishing of teachers has everything to do with the fully-realized humanistic belief that "man is the measure of all things" – Protagoras. That each individual is their own god and therefore needs no one and is beholding to no one.

What Shaw and all others of his ilk fail to realize is that self-learning, as all learning, still comes through teachers. Just because your chosen teacher teaches through the medium of print, or pictures, or audio, or now, video, does not mean that they aren't teaching you. It's pure self-absorbed arrogance to think otherwise.

No one knows anything that wasn't given to them by someone else. Even in the incredibly rare event that a person has a genuinely revolutionary thought, it comes as a result of thinking through the information that they have been taught by their teachers. As John Donne said, "No man is an island unto himself." Or, as I like to say, "Nothing comes from a vacuum." Nothing comes from nothing, despite what materialists' claim; there is always a cause for every effect, by definition.

Here's what is extremely well documented and what I have personally observed, we humans are so full of pride that we detest being taught by someone else.

1) First, it galls us because if someone teaches us something, it means that we didn't know it before – we were in a state of ignorance – we don't like that.

2) Second, it irks us because if we received something from a teacher, we then owe them for their instruction – we are indebted to them – we don't like that.

3) Third, it annoys us because acknowledging that someone is our teacher means that we are their student, which we quite correctly recognize as a submissive role – we don't like that.

I've had many students over my decades of teaching who have tried to pretend that they already knew what I had to teach them and others who tried to learn without being submissive as a learner. In either case, they kept their pride intact, but at the cost of dramatically hindering their ability to learn.

The Bible calls such prideful hinderance having an unteachable spirit.

There are abundant examples... We pay the very dedicated and well-educated people who teach our children and grandchildren stunningly shabby wages and in addition, we give those professional teachers practically zero respect for what they do. Shame on us.

Another example... The lowest paid professional pilots, by far, are flight instructors. Not only are they paid less than 10% of what the average airline pilot makes, for doing a job that is significantly more dangerous, they receive no respect at all for doing it. Honestly, student pilots are given more respect than the pilots teaching them how to fly. It's wrong.

Now to the point... It is frequently the same with pastors. Many Christians have a deep-seated belief that pastors should be kept poor and kept humble.

I cannot begin to tell you how many times I've had people deride me for being overpaid. Likewise, I cannot begin to tell you how many times I've had people give me a compliment only to take it right

back saying something like, “I don’t want you to get a big head.” Or “I don’t want to thank you and take away your spiritual blessing.”

I’m sure that all pastors appreciate being devalued by their church family and protected by them from the dangers associated with receiving a positive comment.

The Apostle Paul made a big deal out of his Apostolic founding of churches free of charge. In doing so, he confirmed that pastors are to be paid by the people they pastor even though he voluntarily refused.

The reason Paul refused taking support from those who he was ministering to was because he was establishing Christianity in new areas for the first time. It was much like missionaries today. The sending churches support missionaries so that they can present the Gospel free of charge to the unsaved. Likewise, the sending churches in Antioch, and later other places, supported Paul so that he could present the Gospel free of charge.

We, here at Alêtheia did that, at least in part as we were able, so that the Sheeran's could go and present the Gospel free of charge. You do that by supporting me as I share the Gospel free of charge to all kinds of people outside of Alêtheia. It's as Paul mentioned in Philippians 1:5, and again in 4:15, the Philippians "participated in the Gospel" by financially supporting Paul so that he could present the Gospel to others free of charge.

Our job as Christians is to be active participants in a local church family where we love one another in many different ways and one of the tangible ways we do that is by supporting our pastor with "all good things."

Verse 7 dramatically reinforces not only verse 6, but the whole concept of loving one another. The point is that God has instituted a principle applicable to everyone and in every case, "You reap what you sow." You will never harvest wheat if you plant corn. You will never harvest spiritual blessings to yourself, if you plant physical blessings for yourself.

"Do not be deceived." It is a command... Don't deceive yourself, God cannot and will not be

mocked. He will never allow you to reap anything other than what you sow. As verse 8 confirms... Sow belief in Him, called faith expressed as trust, and you will reap greater belief, faith, and trust in Him. Sow love and you will reap love. Sow generosity to your pastor with your finances, your respect, your encouragement, your humble teachable spirit and you will reap a tremendous spiritual benefit.

It is a God-ordained universal principle... You reap only what you sow. Sow sparingly and you will reap sparingly. Plant abundantly and you will harvest abundantly. Sow to your physical desires and passions and you will reap temporary physical enjoyment.

Verse 8 is often taken to mean that if you sow to your own selfish benefit, you will end up in the "Lake of Fire." Of course, that's true if that's the only thing you ever plant. If a person never sows anything spiritual, if they never sow belief in Christ, they cannot be Saved.

Here though, Paul is addressing Christians, and his point in a very general sense is that if you take your

excess good things and sow them for your own pleasure at the expense of not sharing them with your pastor, and your church, and those in need... Then what you reap from that is fleeting pleasure that will all be burned to ashes when you face Jesus.

“Destruction,” is decay, decomposition, perishable, and so, what is fleetingly temporary. Take your resources and spend them on what is temporary, and they are gone. Spend them on what is eternal, and the harvest lasts forever. That’s what Paul was talking about in I Corinthians 3:13–15, 13each one’s work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each one’s work. 14If anyone’s work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. 15If anyone’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet only so as through fire.

In an ideal sense, this is about sowing your entire existence, everything that you’ve got, towards a spiritual harvest in order to reap Heaven. That is a valid principle, but practically speaking a Christian

isn't expected to sow everything that they have to others, to the church, to the pastor, and to the poor.

Just like the admonition, “sell everything and give to the poor,” does not mean to literally make yourself poor. We are expected to take care of our own needs, which includes a reasonable degree of leisure and enjoyment. How much is reasonable is between God and your conscience.

Bottom line, it's the difference between sowing to the works of the flesh or sowing to the Fruit of the Spirit. Beyond all of that, in this particular case, we cannot lose sight of the underlying issue of legalism.

Those Galatians who place their hope in circumcision and the works of the Law are sowing to the flesh and will reap destruction. Those who place their trust and confidence in the completed work of Jesus on their behalf are sowing to the Spirit and will reap eternal life.

What happens? We are told to sow to the Spirit, meaning that we are to allow God to love others through us in tangible, as well as intangible ways...

and we do that. We may not do it very well and we may not do it for very long, but we try.

What is it that causes us to give a half-hearted effort and to give up so quickly? Discouragement. Over time, we get discouraged as we see bad things happening to good people, and good things happening to bad people, and we think, well, so much for reaping what you sow.

In verse 9 Paul exhorts us to not grow weary, but rather to patiently trust God. Trust that He will soon enough set all things right. Your sacrifices made for Him will be rewarded. Do you truly believe that?

I know that at times I have questioned it. It isn't easy, but honestly the better you know God the surer you are that He is faithful and trustworthy.

So, like we said last week, sow while there is still time to plant because one day the planting season will be over and there will be nothing left but to harvest what you planted.

“Let’s do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”