



# DAILY FAITH PRACTICES

## Sunday, July 3-9 (C) – Galatians 6[1-6]7-16

Focus: *Reap What You Sow*

### word of life

**“Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow....So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest-time, if we do not give up.”** (Galatians 6:7, 9 NRSV)

Read Galatians 6:[1-6]7-16

The Apostle Paul concludes his letter to the Galatians with a series of tips about living a Christian life and thriving within a Christian community. “Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.” (Galatians 6:2 NRSV) For it is in Christ we have been given freedom—the freedom to love one another.

Christians are to bear the fruit of the Spirit which includes “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.” (See Galatians 6:22.) We shall reap what we sow. This agricultural metaphor of reaping what is sown makes sense even to those who have never planted a seed or gathered a harvest. Apples grow on apple trees not on a corn stalk.

1. *What does it mean to reap what we sow?*
2. *What hinders us from bearing the fruit of the Spirit?*

Sowing is not easy work. “So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest-time, if we do not give up.” (Galatians 6: 9 NRSV) Those not living in the Spirit will continue to stir up the works of the flesh, including strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels and the list goes on. (See Galatians 5:19.) But Christians are encouraged to work for the good of all.

Paul then adds a unique phrase, “See what large letters I make when I am writing in my own hand!” (Galatians 6:11 NRSV) This is Paul’s way of shouting out, “I approve this message. Hear these words! Note this!”

3. *What do you think Paul meant when he mentioned the large letters from his own hand?*
4. *Does it sound like Paul is boasting about his letter?*

Paul probably does not mean to sound like he is boasting over his own words or penmanship because Paul intends to boast only on the cross of Christ. “May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.” (Galatians 6:14 NRSV)

5. *How have you heard Paul boast about the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ?*
6. *What (if anything) did Jesus boast about?*

Paul cannot contain himself. “For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything; but a new creation is everything!” (Galatians 6:15 NRSV) Everything! To Paul, being a new creation in Christ is most important. There are just not adequate words to describe what has changed. In Christ God has done something new, breaking from the past to transform lives. (Paul also uses this new creation imagery in 2 Corinthians 5: 17.) Paul concludes his letter to the Galatians with a final prayer for peace for those who follow Christ.

7. *How might the harvest of peace be shared with others?*

## **Word among us**

Julie's parents spent all Saturday planting spring flowers around the house. By late morning, 6-year Julie decided she was tired of watching her parents have all the fun in the dirt. She was ready to plant something. Julie grabbed her child-size shovel and began to dig a big hole in the ground. And then she planted a bundle of twigs she had been gathering all morning. Her parents could not convince her to plant seeds. With great determination, she covered the twigs with dirt and watered her garden.

The next morning, Julie woke up ready to see her "new" tree. She was heartily convinced a tree would have grown during the night where she had planted her twigs. (Perhaps she had read the story about Jack and the Beanstalk.) Immediately, she ran outside to her garden only to find a pile of dirt without a sign of plant growth. She frantically began to dig a hole in search of her bundle of sticks. With great delight Julie pulled out one thick stick—thicker than all the twigs she had buried—and shouted, "See it did work! My sticks grew into a branch."

1. *How do you explain Julie finding a thick stick instead of the bundle of sticks? (Hint: perhaps she didn't quite dig in the same spot as she buried her sticks.)*
2. *What might be learned from a little girl who sowed a bundle of sticks and thought she grew a thick branch?*
3. *What has been your personal experience with planting? Do you have a green thumb?*
4. *What is the best advice if you want to sow a plentiful crop?*

Paul gives basic advice as well: be ready to reap what you sow. There are a variety of ways to make that point: "If you want friends, you have to be a friend." "Treat others as you want to be treated." "What goes around comes around."

5. *What are other advice have you heard which makes the same point?*
6. *What would your congregation be like if each person planted love?*
7. *What often prevents us from sowing love and compassion?*

## **faith practice in daily life**

### **Serve all people following the example of Jesus**

In baptism we are sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever. We are instructed to follow the example of Jesus Christ and serve all people. His death on the cross epitomizes a willingness to serve, sacrificing his own life.

When it comes to serving others, we cannot control the outcome or know how many lives we might touch or impact. Instead, we persevere to do good, to share love, and to sow seeds of compassion.

8. *How do you try to follow the example of Jesus?*
9. *What aspect of the life of Jesus might you try to sow this week?*

### **Prayer**

Creator of all, teach us to sow love and compassion. Help us to accept the responsibility of reaping what we sow in our lives. Guide us so that the harvest might be bountiful. Amen

### ***last word***

Be intentional  
and plant compassion today.

#### *Daily Faith Practices*

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