

Reap a Harvest

Gal 6:9

And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

Having come through Covid a lot of people have given up on going to church and they've learned to isolate themselves. The common mantra these days is "Crap happens and then you die". As we look around social media, what's happening in politics and all the negativity around us, it's easy to believe, "what's the point?"

Things that used to hold our interest are now boring and we give up on things easily.

Our church has gone through a lot in the last three years.

On some Sundays when people are out of town, like today, it is easy to look around and think, what are doing, what's the point?

As I was praying for the church in the new year, I felt that God was giving verse 9 as a promise and a deposit for our church.

1. ***Let us not grow weary... If we do not give up*** – What does this mean? – These two phrases derive from the same root. To "*grow weary*" – here is ***Ekkakeo*** (ek-kaka-eh'-o) which mean *to be afraid, to become discouraged, to become weary or tired, to despair, to be weak or to fail* (Vine's). The word for "*give up*" at the end of this verse is ***ekluo*** (ek-loo'-o) which means to relax (literally or figuratively) or faint. Paul pictures one who is so discouraged or despondent that he simply quits; One who is so tired, he refuses to go on. The apostle envisions one who quits before he gets to the end, but what is he quitting; of what has he grown weary?
2. . "***...of doing good***" – what specifically he is referring to? The immediate context points to 1) restoring a brother who is overtaken in sin (6:1), 2) bearing another's burden (6:2), and 3) sharing our resources with those who teach the truth (6:6). But the overall context takes us back to the development of the fruits of the Spirit at the end of chapter 5. (**Gal 5:22-23** – *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, self-control.*)

This is truly the "*sowing to the Spirit*" under consideration.

Have you ever grown tired of being good? Have you ever grown weary of loving people who hate you? Trying to make peace with the contentious? Being patient with the rebellious; being kind to the hateful; doing good to those who are unthankful; treating the harsh people with gentleness; trying to control your desires when no else is

controlling theirs? It can be difficult to keep on the path of righteousness when there is so much unrighteousness around us. It can seem to be a useless endeavor. It is a waste of time?

B. Why do we get tired of living righteously, or doing good?

- Conflict with the ungodly world.
- Ingratitude those we serve.
- Indifference of other Christians
- The size of the task before us
- Opposition to the work
- Some experience what has been labeled as “burnout.”
- Failure to see results.
- Active persecution.
- Our job is to plant and water; God’s work is to give the increase (1 Cor. 3:6-9). God has not put us in charge of the harvest; we are to sow the seed.

Jesus spoke of a time when evil would appear to have the upper hand –

Matt 24:11-14

And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. 12 And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. 13 But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

We must not allow ourselves to be chilled by the evil of our generation. We cannot abandon the task of doing good. God promises a harvest. But when?

3. **“In Due Season”** – One absolute about reaping a harvest is that you must wait for it. The harvest does not come right away. For the farmer the waiting is a built-in part of the process (it tells you right on the packet of seeds, and serious farmers plant accordingly. James uses this principle of necessary waiting to teach patience...

James 5:7 – Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain.

“The Early and Latter Rain” – The early rain came in October or November for the germination of the grain, and the latter rain was needed in April and May for maturing the grain. The phrase denotes the full spectrum of the growing season – beginning to end.

They could believe at least two things:

- a) They could trust God to provide everything they needed for a plentiful harvest. Not need to water this land by hand or foot.
- b) God would see it through to the end – He would not abandon them. Later in this speech Moses assures them that if they will trust and obey Jehovah, and not turn to other gods, He will drive out all of their enemies.

God's promise of harvest is conditional on our endurance, or faithfulness. **"If we don't give up"**. Paul elsewhere compares our life as God's people as a foot race.

Heb. 12:1-2 – 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, 2 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.

This race is not a sprint, it is a marathon. The word endurance literally means "to abide under, to wait patiently." We cannot allow ourselves be distracted. Many sprint out of the gate, but soon tire out and fall out of the race.

a) endurance requires counting the cost. Jesus admonished his disciples to count the cost of following Him. Those who did not would easily become discouraged and fail to finish. Being a Christian will not solve all of your problems.

b) endurance requires constant prayer: We must speak to God and cast upon him our cares. We need to seek the courage and strength that God supplies. After describing the elements of spiritual armor that we need to fight the battle (or win the struggle), Paul says... **"praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints (Eph 6:18)**

c) endurance requires renewal of spirit: That means being renewed in our spirit by God's Spirit, through a constant contact with the words of God.

Eph 4:22-24 to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds,

2 Cor 4:16-5:1

6 So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. 17 For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, 18 as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

Conclusion: As we go into 2023, we need to be aware is that our job is to sow seeds and keep weeds, pests, and blight (The enemy) at bay. As we talked about last week, "resist the Devil and he will flee from you." It is God who brings the rain and grows the seed into something that can be harvested. If we but keep on keeping on, God will come through and we will reap a harvest.