

## The Inescapable Law

Galatians 6:7-10

*7 Be not deceived; **God is not mocked**: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. 9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. 10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*

### God Is Not Mocked

The world is full of mockers mocking God, shaking their fists in the face of God as if He didn't exist. You can't mock God. This is a culture that mocks God relentlessly. We have a choice as a believer: one can walk in the Spirit; or they can walk in the flesh. Let us not think even for a moment that you can walk in the flesh and not pay the consequence.

Dan chapter 4 Nebuchadnezzar; became a beast

Dan chapter 5 Belshazzar; God writes on the wall

Romans chapter 1, "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness." They turn from the Creator to the creature. Romans 1 describe a mockery of God, and the wrath of God is released on men when they mock God. The wrath in Romans is the wrath of turning them over to their sin, to immorality, homosexuality, and a reprobate mind.

Forms of God's wrath:

1. Eternal wrath. God's eternal wrath is hell, where all unbelievers will suffer punishment forever.
2. Eschatological wrath; the wrath describe for the end of human history. Wrath described by the prophets and described by our Lord in the Olivet Discourse (Matt 24) at the end of His ministry in Jerusalem, and it's described particularly in the book of Revelation.
3. Cataclysmic wrath. Cataclysmic wrath is what we see in natural disasters and plagues and all of those kinds of things though human history, where in some cases in the past, millions of people died from a plague. And in the modern time, tens of thousands die in a tsunami, and some die in a hurricane, or whatever it is. The world, the fallen world, the cursed world is subject to these cataclysmic events, which are a form of divine wrath. Romans 8:22; Gen 3:17; Gal. 3:10.

4. Cyclical wrath; it's always in place, and it's sowing and reaping wrath: what you sow, you reap. And it just never stops. It is happening all the time. "Whatever a man sows, this he will also reap." Whenever he sows, that's when he will set in motion the wrath of God. This is a divine principle. If you think you can violate it you're mocking God.

Job 4:8, "Those who plow iniquity sow trouble and harvest it."

Proverbs 1:31, "They shall eat of the fruit of their own way."

Proverbs 11:18, "The wicked earns deceptive wages; he who sows righteousness earns a true reward."

Hosea 8:7, "They who sow the wind reap the whirlwind."

Eph. 6:1-9 The fruit of a life is determined by what that life has planted. A man's character and condition is the harvest of his habits. Think about a child, foolishly indulged and encouraged to think only of its own whims and its own wishes and its own way. And it may be cute; but the obstinate, stubborn, sullen, self-centered, undisciplined adult reaps the whirlwind.

Prov 22:6 - One English writer put the law in a moral sense in these words: "What strikes me more and more each day is the permanence of one's early life, the identity between youth and manhood. Every habit, good and bad, of those early years seems to have permanently affected my whole life. The battle is largely won or lost before it seems to begin."

Numbers 32:23 it says this: "Be sure your sins will find you out."

Psalms 90:7-8 For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.

Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.

Isaiah 3:11, "Woe to the wicked! It will go badly for him, for what he deserves will be done to him." Isaiah 59:12, "Our sins testify against us."

Romans 2:9, "There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil." So the law of God is unchanging, immutable, and relentless just as God's nature. It is a form of operating wrath built into the world.

Duet 21:23; Gal 3:13; Heb. 2:9-18

God, at the point of salvation, intercepts that fully operating law of sowing and reaping, and gives new life, so that a Christian will have the capacity, since being freed from that law, to do what honors God, to walk in the Spirit by the miracle of redemption. You can now reap what Christ has sown. Yet in your daily life, that principle still operates. If you walk in the flesh, you'll harvest the flesh. If you walk in the Spirit, you'll harvest the Spirit.

In a material sense; Salvation doesn't prevent people who drink and smoke and harm

their bodies from getting sick or getting cancer. The Christian who gets in a fight may be a Christian, but it's not going to prevent him from having his teeth knocked out. If you drive recklessly and go off the road, have an accident, the fact that you're a Christian isn't going to protect you from the fact that you sowed irresponsibility and you ended up with the results. If you're a Christian and you sin immorally with another person, that's not going to necessarily protect you from venereal disease.

James 1:13-16; Galatians 5:14-21; Matt. 26:41; Rom. 7:14-15

The harvest of the flesh. Sow to the flesh, and from the flesh you will reap corruption. Corruption means "decay," "disintegration," "degeneration," or even the ultimate corruption, which is "death." If the flesh is indulged, as in verses Galatians 5:19 to 21, the fruit is corrupt: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing.

John Stott wrote, "Every time we allow our mind to harbor a grudge, nurse a grievance, entertain an impure fancy, or wallow in self-pity, we are sowing to the flesh. Every time we linger in bad company, who's insidious influence we know we cannot resist, every time we lie in bed when we ought to be up and praying, every time we read pornographic literature, every time we take a risk that strains our self-control, we are sowing, sowing, sowing to the flesh."

Holiness is a harvest. Holiness is a harvest of sowing to the Spirit, not the flesh. Sow to the flesh, you harvest corruption. This corruption is the corruption of your Christian experience: the loss of peace; the loss of joy; the loss of worship, service, and usefulness.

**Sowing discord.** The subject of talebearing is so important because it is a principal means of sowing discord among the brethren. Sowing discord is one of seven things that are listed as abominations (Proverbs 6:19). An abomination is something God hates, and it will keep you out of heaven (Revelation 21:8). Sowing discord involves going from person to person causing dislike, distrust, and division by telling confidential things or by constant criticism. The kind of person that sows discord by words is one who thinks he can tell all kinds of things anywhere, anytime, to anyone.

These people repeat things they heard in confidence and obtained through friendship. They are not afraid to criticize anyone. Test yourself in this area. Do you enjoy gossiping about people? Do you enjoy hearing something bad about someone? Do you enjoy telling everything you know? Do you enjoy criticizing or laying blame on others? Do you stir up trouble, dissension, and strife?

Luke 11:39; 20:14, 47; John 10:11-13; Acts 20:29-30; James 4:2; 1Cor. 6:6; Phil 4:2

**Talebearing and gossip.** This is one of the most vicious sins. It is Satan's primary tool for destroying the church from within. It can destroy confidence in people, harm the innocent, and hinder the repentant. It splits churches, discourages saints, and disillusion new converts. The Bible teaches us to speak evil of no man, especially our brothers and sisters in the Lord (Titus 3:2; James 4:11). "Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off" (Psalm 101:5). Most people will readily acknowledge the evils of gossip, but the problem comes in identifying it in their own lives. This is an area of great practical difficulty in the lives of many Christians.

Explicit meaning of talebearing or gossip. Basically, it means telling things of a personal, intimate, or sensational nature. It includes spreading rumors that could damage someone, and it includes backbiting, which means telling scandalous things about someone. Notice that gossip not only includes lying about someone or spreading unverified rumors about someone, but it even includes telling facts of a personal nature that the gossiper has no business revealing. Telling a fact can be talebearing when it is told as gossip to one who does not need to know about it.

God has ordained organization and authority in the church (I Corinthians 12:28). When problems arise in the church, those in authority should be informed. However, needless talebearing to other members of the congregation is not right. Lay members in the church are not to judge one another (Romans 14:10, 13; Matthew 7:1; James 4:12). In the church, the leadership can and must judge in order to protect the flock (Matthew 18:18; I Corinthians 6:5).

This means the leadership does have the responsibility for dealing with sin in the church. It also means the laity does not have that responsibility. Sometimes, certain things must be told for clarification, for instruction, or for accuracy. In general, however, telling stories that could be harmful to others is not right in the sight of God. Talebearing and gossip are against the Word of God. "Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth. The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly" (Proverbs 26:20, 22).

For example, what should you do if you find out that a certain man who is in the church and who calls himself a brother has committed adultery? You cannot conceal the sin, for you do not have that authority. You must report it to the person in authority—the pastor, presbyter, or superintendent, depending on the person involved. At that point, the matter becomes the leader's responsibility. If you then tell everyone else in the church you become a talebearer. There is a reason for telling the pastor since he must protect the rest of the church and must try to help the sinning brother. There is no reason, however, to tell anyone else. If the brother has repented, why tell anyone about the sin? How will it help him to tell everyone else of his fall?

Example two, suppose a lay member falls into sin, repents, and moves to another church. The former pastor should inform the new pastor so that the latter may

help him, but it should be kept secret from the other church members. These examples explain two scriptures about talebearing. "A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter" (Proverbs 11:13). "He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends" (Proverbs 17:9).

Notice that you never have the authority to cover unrepented sin regardless of whether it is your friend who is involved or not. Also, you cannot cover sin that will disqualify a man from his position according to the Bible. In both cases, the one in authority needs to know. At the same time, you do not need to retell your friend's sin to others. That is between him, those in authority over him, and God. Basically, a private sin becomes a church problem when the person does not repent but lives as a hypocrite, or when he brings disgrace and reproach upon the church. This is especially relevant when someone in a position of leadership has sinned.

Example three, what if a deacon in the church commits adultery, but repents? The pastor should still be informed because this is a matter that could disgrace the whole church and because the deacon has lost his qualifications, namely his good report. The one with whom he has sinned as well as anyone who finds out about the sin will lose confidence in the church if nothing is done. This does not mean that the pastor should make a public announcement of the repented sin. In many cases, the pastor may put someone on probation or silence them for a certain period of time. Of course, the people should not speculate and gossip about what has happened.

**How to deal with rumors.** If you hear that another saint has said something against you, done something against you, or has been indiscreet in some areas, what should you do? First, love thinks no evil, so you should disbelieve the rumor. Forget about it. If after praying you cannot forget it, then go to the person involved, get the story straight from them, and clear it up (Matthew 18:15). What happens if you hear a serious rumor about someone? If you cannot ignore it then ask the pastor about it. The pastor should then speak to the individual concerned. If he is persuaded that the rumor is false then he should so advise those who heard it. If he feels that it is true he has a duty to clear up the problem. He cannot ignore it. Regardless of the outcome, you should not pass the rumor on any farther.

If the pastor hears a serious rumor about you, he should call you in and explain what he has heard. If you explain the situation and it is the result of a misunderstanding, you must not get a bad spirit. Do not try to find out who started the rumor or who is doing the talking, but be thankful that the pastor is trying to help you. Let him clear it up. If you try to find out who told the pastor, you are manifesting a spirit of vengeance and malice. Let the pastor rebuke the one who started the rumor. If you are really innocent, the person who reported the rumor to the pastor has done you a favor, especially if they did not spread it any further.