

Washington church of Christ

27 Grand Avenue, Washington, NJ 07882

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washingtonnjchurchofchrist.com

Order of Services

Sunday, November 18, 2012

Song Leader	Derald Sanchez
Prayer	Ralph Ruggiero
Preaching	Bob James
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	Pete Ferencze
Prayer for the Cup	Bill Duryea
Prayer for the Collection	Bob Celentano
Assisting at the Table	Gennaro Ruggiero
Closing Prayer	Lee Redd
Announcements	Brian Jeffries

Sunday, November 25, 2012

Song Leader	Cameron Wydro
Prayer	Tom Dolan
Preaching	Bob James
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	Bob Celentano
Prayer for the Cup	Derald Sanchez
Prayer for the Collection	Lee Redd
Assisting at the Table	Bob DeGrado
Closing Prayer	Ralph Ruggiero
Announcements	Brian Jeffries

Schedule of Weekly Services

Sunday Morning Bible Classes	9:30 am
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 am
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 pm
Wednesday Evening Bible Classes	7:30 pm

The Washington Messenger

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You Determine the Harvest ...

In the history of many cultures ceremonies were performed with the objective of bringing about a bountiful harvest. It is said that in northern Europe one such custom was to weave straw between the spokes of a wheel ... two men would then rush towards a river, rolling the wheel between them. If they were able to submerge the wheel into the water while the straw was still burning, it was taken as an omen of a good harvest for that year.

We know, of course, that this was only superstition, for there can be no relation between a ritual and a harvest four or five months later. A good harvest is determined by such things as soil, seed, climate, and labor. What a man sows, where and when he sows it, the condition under which it is sown, and the care given to it after it is sown are the factors which largely determine the nature of the harvest. If good seed is sown liberally, all other factors being equal, a good harvest can be anticipated.

This fact is also true in the moral, and spiritual, sense. The apostle Paul wrote:

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. (Galatians 6:7-8 NKJV)

This is one of the many statements of the Bible that is plain such that it requires little, if any, commentary. It declares the immutable law that one determines his own harvest by that which he sows.

It is interesting to note that Paul is not the first in the Bible to impart this wisdom to mankind. About thirty years before Paul's statement, Jesus in the parable of the tares said:

Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. (Matthew 13:24-26 NKJV)

In the fact that good grain and tares were both sown ... and, both sprouted and grew, Jesus was teaching that what is sown will be reaped.

But, nearly eight centuries before the birth of Christ the prophet Hosea said of Israel:

"They sow the wind, And reap the whirlwind. The stalk has no bud; It shall never produce meal. If it should produce, Aliens would swallow it up. (Hosea 8:7 NKJV)

So, the essence of this great law was operative hundreds of years before Paul or Christ taught it. But, these words did not originate with Hosea. When we go back another two hundred years, or so, we read of David saying;

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. (Psalms 126:5-6 NKJV)

And, earlier still, we see that the Law given to Moses by God on Mt. Sinai contained the teaching:

“eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.” (Exodus 21:24-25 NKJV)

This law of reciprocity held the wicked in check, and encouraged the righteous more than 3,500 years ago. It was a benefit to the good and a tragedy to the evil, for they well knew that whatever they sowed, they would inevitably reap.

Although we have traveled back some thirty five centuries, we have not yet arrived at the beginning of the law of sowing and reaping.

In the first chapter of the Bible we read that God, in creation, declared that everything would bring forth after its kind. This decree was repeated nine times in that account. Therefore, the world, and all in it, is built upon that eternal principle ... whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap.

This law of the universe governs the animate and inanimate creation, the physical, the moral, and the Spiritual realms. We live by it ... and we will die by it. And even after this life is over its effect will be felt through all eternity.

With all of this in mind, each of us should think on the harvest we will receive if we continue on our present course in life. This law cannot be violated. We cannot change it and reap what we have not sown ... nor can we escape its force and not reap what we have sown.

Throughout the pages of God’s Word we have proof that this law is applicable to all, no matter who they may be.

Jacob deceived his aged, and near blind, father in order to receive his blessing (Genesis 27), and he himself received the fruits of his sowing abundantly. He was deceived by his uncle and had to work fourteen years, instead of seven years, for his beloved wife Rachel (Genesis 29:27-30). He was also deceived by his own sons and mourned some thirty years for Joseph, whom he assumed to be dead.

David caused Uriah to be killed by the *sword* in battle, and God decreed that the *sword* would never depart from David’s house (2 Samuel 12:9, 10).

Our nation is seemingly beset with problems that appear to be without a solution ... political corruption, moral depravity, and dysfunctional families prevail. Could it be that we are but experiencing the force and results of this immutable law of God? Have we forgotten the words of the wise man Solomon?

Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a reproach to any people. (Proverbs 14:34 NKJV)

Have we, as a nation sown to the wind, and are now reaping the whirlwind?

What of our individual lives? Are we, with good cause, concerned about our harvest?

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. (Galatians 6:8 NKJV)

We sow to the flesh is when we allow our old nature, driven and influenced by sin, to have its way. And in like fashion, sowing to the Spirit is when we allow, through God’s Word, the Holy Spirit to have His way in our lives.

The one who does the latter is walking by the Spirit ...

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. (Galatians 5:16 NKJV)

... and, is being led by the Spirit.

But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. (Galatians 5:18 NKJV)

Again, he who has been sowing to please his flesh will reap decay and destruction. On the other hand, he who has been sowing to please God will reap life everlasting.

The context in which Paul spoke the following words to the church in Roman was a discussion of the merits of the Law of Moses versus the Law of Grace and Truth. However, the message is applicable to our discussion of reaping and sowing:

For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. (Romans 8:13-14 NKJV)

May we, as individuals, turn to the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:2), and stay obedient to the Gospel of Christ (Mark 16:15, 16).

... **Bob James**

Our Prayer List...

- ✧ Donna Banghart ... Georgia DeLorenzo ... Glenn Montgomery’s father ... Mary Celentano ... Linda Davis of the church at West Point ... our young people here at Washington ... our young people away at college ... our men and women in military service ... leaders of our nation and the upcoming election ... leaders of our congregation ... our congregation ... those impacted by the hurricane.
- ✧ Many of our members, and/or their families, will be traveling over the next week. Please remember them in our prayers.

“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.” (1 John 5:14-15 NIV)

Coming Events - Home & Away...

- ✧ Though it’s still a few months away, we are planning our Spring 2013 Gospel Meeting with Tommy Peeler from FC. We are currently targeting the week of March 10th, so please plan your 2013 spring vacations and travels around that date if at all possible.

Items of Note...

- ✧ Our new Washington church of Christ website has launched and is now online at www.washingtonnjchurchofchrist.com. We are already receiving comments and Bible questions from visitors to the site. We also encourage each member to register for access to the “members” section. Once your register you can view and update your directory information. Please feel free to give me your suggestions and or questions ... Bob James