



Galatians 6:7-16

YELLOW LINES

Does lack of enforcement mean non-compliance. If there is no-one around to bring us to account, does it mean that we can do something wrong and get away with it?

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

This saying has been used by many over the years by many politicians in relation to political wrongdoing, but it seems to have been used first by Abraham Lincoln.

YOU CAN'T MAKE A FOOL OF GOD

Whatever we might get away with with people, we can't get away with anything with God. He misses nothing.

The value of modern society is that people will do something wrong if they don't think they are going to get caught. The problem is that even as God's people we can live under the delusion that we can get away with something because somehow God isn't doing anything about it right now, that's it's not doing any real harm, or I'm only human after all. Paul says "don't deceive yourselves." God sees everything, He knows everything. You reap what you sow. You've heard the term before, but let's explore it some more. It's obviously along the lines that whatever we think we can do or not, we're not going to get away with it.

CROPS – WHEAT AND CANNABIS

The principle of reaping and sowing is this. What you plant is what comes up out of the ground. Any gardener will know that if you accidentally plant the wrong seed (In the picture someone accidentally sowed cannabis instead of something else), then it could be months before you find out that you've sown the wrong crop. So often there is a gap between what we do wrong and our come-uppance.

Worse, however much we want wheat to grow, if we sow cannabis, we will get cannabis!

VERSE

If you plant in the field of your natural desires, from it you will gather the harvest of death; if you plant in the field of the Spirit, from the Spirit you will gather the harvest of eternal life.

The simple principle is that if we follow our natural desires – which are towards sin, then all that comes out is a harvest of death. If you don't know Jesus at all this morning, then death means just that – an eternity without God. If you do, then even though that's not your end, sin brings death into our lives and relationships – sin always has its consequences. In chapter 5 Paul spells this out even more

VERSE

Gal 5:19 What human nature does is quite plain. It shows itself in immoral, filthy, and indecent actions; 20 in worship of idols and witchcraft. People become enemies and they

fight; they become jealous, angry, and ambitious. They separate into parties and groups; 21 they are envious, get drunk, have orgies, and do other things like these. I warn you now as I have before: those who do these things will not possess the Kingdom of God.

Sin always has its consequences. Some people see it as God wreaking judgement on people, but so often we wreak the consequences of sin on ourselves – we destroy our relationships and make enemies, we selfishly dismiss and tread over others, we do things with destroy our health. And when we get into a mess, is it God's judgement? No, it's the consequences of our own actions. We reap what we sow – however long that takes to come to fruition.

TITANIC

Remember the phrase associated with Titanic? Because this was said by someone – believed to be a steward re-assuring a worried passenger afraid of Titanic sinking – many said afterwards the sinking was God's judgement. It wasn't. White Star Line didn't need any assistance in sending their prize ship to the bottom of the Atlantic. Their complacency and incompetence in the design and sailing of the ship was breathtaking! The massive loss of life was a direct consequence of their wrongdoing. We reap what we sow.

Even if we do think we are going to get away with it, then know this: God is going to deal with each one of us according to what we have done. We reap what we sow – it will come to fruition. We are all accountable to God in the final analysis. The verse comes with a warning: I warn you now as I have before: those who do these things will not possess the Kingdom of God. If you don't know Jesus this morning, the one day you will need to give an account of yourself before God. What are you going to say? What's going to be your excuse?

As God's people, those of us that have accepted Jesus; if any of this is a characteristic of our lives – or any sin, then we need to come before God in repentance, asking His forgiveness because it shouldn't be happening. No excuses. In Jesus – His broken body and shed blood – we shouldn't be doing any of it because by His Spirit we have been given the power to be and do something completely different.

VERSE

22 But the Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 humility, and self-control. There is no law against such things as these. 24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have put to death their human nature with all its passions and desires.

That's the challenge to us. If we know Jesus, then we should be reaping the fruit of the Spirit. There's nothing wrong with *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control*. We can do as much of these as we like – enjoy! *We reap what we sow. If you plant in the field of the Spirit, from the Spirit you will gather the harvest of eternal life.*

That's what God wants for us – to gather in the harvest of eternal life.

But he goes on to describe just what implications planting in the Spirit is all about. There's two of them.

VERSE

9 So let us not become tired of doing good; for if we do not give up, the time will come

when we will reap the harvest. 10 So then, as often as we have the chance, we should do good to everyone, and especially to those who belong to our family in the faith.

Let's do what's right, let's work for the good of all. It's pertinent to our sermons the last two weeks. The right thing is to benefit others. It's the principle of agape we've so often looked at. The problems of the world are caused because people don't follow it – they don't put the needs of others before themselves.

Have we become a bit tired of doing good, especially to the household of faith? Then let's take the opportunity to repent this morning and resolve to never give up. Let's have a look at the second implication.

VERSE

14 As for me, however, I will boast only about the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; for by means of his cross the world is dead to me, and I am dead to the world. 15 It does not matter at all whether or not one is circumcised; what does matter is being a new creature.

For the people in Galatia, they were being influenced by people who wanted Christians to become Jewish proselytes – become Jews in effect. Paul says “why?” In Christ we are new creatures. The Jewish system is the old stuff. In Christ we aren't any part of that, we are new creations. New people. Therefore we should commit ourselves to being what we're called to be new.

And by the Holy spirit, we are given the means and the power to be God's people. There are no excuses. We need to repent and walk the Spirit's way.

VERSE

16 As for those who follow this rule in their lives, may peace and mercy be with them--with them and with all of God's people!

We are called to walk God's way. Called to sow in the Spirit so that we gather in the harvest of eternal life.

If that's not been us this morning and we know Jesus, then it's time to recognise that afresh, come in confession and then lay hold of the promises of God. He is a God who gives us His Spirit that we may do what is right, what is good and bear fruit: *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control*. We are new creations. As we come around the table this morning, let's re-affirm that and ask for the Spirit's strength and power to be what we are called to!

[1 My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness. Take care that you yourselves are not tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. 3 For if those who are nothing think they are something, they deceive themselves. 4 All must test their own work; then that work, rather than their neighbor's work, will become a cause for pride. 5 For all must carry their own loads. 6 Those who are taught the word must share in all good things with their teacher.]

7 Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow. 8 If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit. 9 So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. 10 So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith. 11 See what large letters I make when I am writing in my own hand! 12 It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that try to compel you to be circumcised—only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. 13 Even the circumcised do not themselves obey the law, but they want you to be circumcised so that they may boast about your flesh. 14 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. 15 For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything; but a new creation is everything! 16 As for those who will follow this rule—peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

7 Do not deceive yourselves; no one makes a fool of God. You will reap exactly what you plant. 8 If you plant in the field of your natural desires, from it you will gather the harvest of death; if you plant in the field of the Spirit, from the Spirit you will gather the harvest of eternal life. 9 So let us not become tired of doing good; for if we do not give up, the time will come when we will reap the harvest. 10 So then, as often as we have the chance, we should do good to everyone, and especially to those who belong to our family in the faith. 11 See what big letters I make as I write to you now with my own hand! 12 The people who are trying to force you to be circumcised are the ones who want to show off and boast about external matters. They do it, however, only so that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. 13 Even those who practice circumcision do not obey the Law; they want you to be circumcised so that they can boast that you submitted to this physical ceremony. 14 As for me, however, I will boast only about the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; for by means of his cross the world is dead to me, and I am dead to the world. 15 It does not matter at all whether or not one is circumcised; what does matter is being a new creature. 16 As for those who follow this rule in their lives, may peace and mercy be with them--with them and with all of God's people!

You don't make a fool of God! You shouldn't be a Christian and still live life as the world does and get away with it. God is our judge. Also temporal consequences that we have to face.

Background – Christians were being told their faith was not sufficient – they had to become Jews. Paul says, that's going back – it's sowing in the world. If we are believers we are to sow the right kind of crop to produce the right kind of fruit. if you plant in the field of the Spirit, from the Spirit you will gather the harvest of eternal life.

Not so much about saved or lost, but rather how we honour God and grow in our faith in Christ. What we sow is what we reap:

Gal 5:19 What human nature does is quite plain. It shows itself in immoral, filthy, and indecent actions; 20 in worship of idols and witchcraft. People become enemies and they fight; they become jealous, angry, and ambitious. They separate into parties and groups; 21 they are envious, get drunk, have orgies, and do other things like these. I warn you now as I have before: those who do these things will not possess the Kingdom of God. 22 But the Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 humility, and self-control. There is no law against such things as these. 24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have put to death their human nature with all its passions and desires.

You reap what you sow. We are accountable for our actions.

Take every opportunity to do good – because we will reap the harvest.

Don't hear back - Dead to the world – we are a new creature