YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW
Living With The Consequences Of Sin

Introduction

“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap” (Galatians 6:7).

“You’ve made your bed, now you must lie in it” (Unknown).

1. This is an immutable law of God’s government in every realm. In the physical realm, a man who sows wheat seed can expect to only reap wheat. In the spiritual realm, a man who sows evil can expect to only reap evil on the Day of Judgment (Galatians 6:8).

2. A comprehension of this law helps us to understand why many Christians find themselves in difficult and undesirable circumstances.

I. THE CONSEQUENCES OF DISOBEDIENCE

A. Adam and Eve were commanded not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and they were warned of the consequence (Genesis 2:16-17). But the Serpent deceived them and tempted them to sin (Genesis 3:1-7).

B. God forgave them of their sin but they had to suffer the consequences; which were far greater than they could have imagined:

1. First, there were the personal consequences:

   a) Death. On that day they both died. On the day they sinned they experienced physical death (being denied access to the tree of life, they became mortal and their bodies began to grow old) and spiritual death.

   b) Sweat and pain. Adam was sentenced to a life of hard labor in providing for himself and his family (Genesis 3:17-19). Eve was sentenced to a greater degree of pain in childbirth and would be ruled over by her husband (Genesis 3:16).

2. But the consequences were far more reaching!

   a) The consequence of their sin has come upon us all for we are all denied access to the tree of life, and the ground still produces thorns, thistles, and weeds and man still eats bread by the sweat of his brow. Women, too, still suffer multiplied pain in childbirth.

   b) Also, nature itself suffers the consequences of man’s sin! The ground was cursed for man’s sake (Genesis 3:17). Note what Paul says:

      “For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now” (Romans 8:22 NASB).

II. THE CONSEQUENCES OF BAD PARENTING

A. It wasn’t that Eli didn’t know how to discipline his children…he just didn’t bother. He was aware of his son’s wickedness but failed to discipline them…he simply told them off (1 Samuel 2:22-25).

B. Did Samuel ever imagine that his failure to discipline his children would have such tragic consequences?

1. The consequences of Eli’s failure to discipline his sons:

   ‘Therefore the Lord God of Israel declares, ‘I did indeed say that your house and the house of your father should walk before Me forever’; but now the Lord declares, 'Far be it from Me—for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me will be lightly esteemed. 'Behold, the days are coming when I will break your strength and the strength of your father's house so that there will not be an old man in your house. 'You will see the distress of My dwelling, in spite of all the good that I do for Israel; and an old man will not be in your house forever. ‘Yet I will not cut off every man of yours from My altar so that your eyes will fail from weeping and your soul grieve, and all the increase of your house will die in the prime of life” (1 Samuel 2:30-33 NASB).
“The Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I am about to do a thing in Israel at which both ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. In that day I will carry out against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. For I have told him that I am about to judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knew, because his sons brought a curse on themselves and he did not rebuke them. Therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli’s house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever” (1 Samuel 3:11-14 NASB).

2. The Lord began to fulfill these things shortly before and after Samuel’s death: his two sons were killed and his daughter-in-law died during childbirth (1 Samuel 4:12-22).

III. THE CONSEQUENCES OF UNBELIEF

A. As they wandered through the desert, the children of Israel began grumbling because they had no water. So the Lord instructed Moses and Aaron to speak to a certain rock out of which water would flow to quench the thirst of the congregation (Numbers 20:6-8).

B. Moses’ disbelief.

1. Moses demonstrated his disbelief in three respects:
   a. He was supposed to speak to the rock but, instead, struck it twice with his staff (Numbers 20:8).
   b. He was supposed to speak to the rock but instead spoke to the people in a fury (Psalms 106:32-33).
   c. He should have given the glory to God but took it to himself (Numbers 20:10).

2. The consequence of his disbelief was that he was not allowed to enter the Promised Land:

   “But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them” (Numbers 20:12 NASB).

Conclusion

1. In the three examples we have considered, we have seen that whatever a man sows, that will he also reap.
   a. It is an unchangeable law and applies to every generation.
   b. It is a law that is no respecter of persons: whether you are a family man, like Adam, or serving the Lord in some respect, like Eli, or the leader of a nation, like Moses.

2. The consequences of sin are always serious, even though we may not be able to foresee them, and even now we are all suffering the consequences of sin:
   a. However blameless you may be, a man still earns his living by the sweat of his brow, and a woman still suffers multiplied pains in childbirth; the consequences of the sin of our first parents.
   b. Perhaps there is some unhappy circumstance in which you now find yourself that is the consequence of your past sin:
      1) Maybe you have failed to restrain and discipline your children and are now seeing them walk in rebellion, and they are bringing you sorrow and shame?
      2) Maybe, before becoming a Christian, you lived a life of fornication and are now a struggling single mother or a man paying maintenance for unplanned children?
      3) Maybe you squandered your money in the days of your youth and are now retired with barely enough on which to live?
c. **The consequences of your present sin may have far greater consequences** that you could have imagined!

Think of Eli, for example, and the consequences that came on his descendants.

3. **What is the proper response to the circumstances in which we now find ourselves as a result of the consequences of sin; whether the sins of our fathers or our own sins?**

   a. We have no grounds to complain if the bed we are lying in is of our own making:

   “Who is there who speaks and it comes to pass, Unless the Lord has commanded it? Is it not from the mouth of the Most High That both good and ill go forth? Why should any living mortal, or any man, Offer complaint in view of his sins? Let us examine and probe our ways, And let us return to the Lord” (Lamentations 3:37-40 NASB).

   b. Rather, we must humble ourselves and submit to the will of God:

   “…And he said, It is the Lord; let Him do what seems good to Him” (1 Samuel 3:18b NASB).

4. **But do not get the wrong idea...the fact that we reap what we sow, that we have to live with the consequences of our sin, does not mean we are not forgiven. David had to suffer the consequences of his sin but the Lord graciously forgave him. If Job was patient in his suffering, though he walked blamelessly, how much more should we be patient?**

   “Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door. As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord’s dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful” (James 5:7-11 NASB).

5. **The greatest sin is that of unbelief and it is unbelief that will bar us from entering the Promised Land:**

   “Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called Today, so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end, while it is said, TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS, AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME. For who provoked Him when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses? And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief” (Hebrews 3:12-19 NASB).

Disobedience of God’s commands has consequences.
Bad parenting has consequences.
Unbelief has consequences.

If you believe the gospel then you are urged to obey it today by being immersed in water for the remission of yours sin. You may have to live with the consequences of sins but the longer you leave it, the greater the consequences. And if you leave it indefinitely then you will not enter the Promised Land and you will suffer the consequences of your sin for all eternity.

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