

SOWING SEED IN MARRIAGE

(This article may change your marriage and your relationships with other people)

"While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease" (Genesis 8:22). This verse tells us that there will always be a time of sowing seed and a time of harvest. It is never too late to start sowing seed. However, we may have to reap what we have sowed in the past before we can reap a new harvest.

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalm 126:5-6). When we sow seed, we must be willing to give up the seed. The farmer's seed is valuable, but he must give it up by planting it in the ground. The harvest will in time come that will bring us joy!

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." (Ecclesiastes 11:6). There is no question of both failing. However, both may produce fruit.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap if we faint not" (Galatians 6:7, 9). Sowing seed will always produce fruit. God has established the law of sowing and reaping. Therefore, we should seek to sow good seed that we may harvest good fruit.

WHAT TO SOW: First of all, we are to sow God's love. We may not have love to sow in the life of the other person. I often hear women say, "I don't love him anymore." That is O.K. to begin. However, we must understand that God's love comes from God. God will give us the seed to sow. "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having sufficiency in all things, may abound in every good work" (II Corinthians 9:8). We just must be willing to sow God's love.

What is God's love? "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vauntedth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things" (I Corinthians 13:4-7).

It is interesting that we find seed inside of fruit. Therefore, we are to bear the fruit of the Spirit and in doing so plant the seed in that fruit. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22:23).

HOW TO SOW: First, we are to sow words. (1) We are to use words of praise. When was the last time you praised your spouse? (See Proverbs 31:28). Praise is not flattery, but showing true adoration. (2) We are to use words to pray. If my wife is having a difficulty, she may come to me and ask, "Are you still praying for me?" (3) We are to use written words. These are affectionate love notes. The wife may put a love note in his lunch. The husband may put a love note on her pillow. When was the last time you wrote your spouse a good love letter? (4) We are to use words of counsel. This is not a list of demands, but wise advise allowing the other person to make the decision for himself. (5) We all should use and need words of encouragement. For example, we may say, "With God's help, you are going to get through this situation."

Second, we are to sow actions. (1) There is to be financial support. The husband is to care for his wife financially. Finances are tied to security for the wife. She, in turn, is to be a helpmate financially. The virtuous wife of Proverbs 31, was a business woman. She cared for her family, but was also known in the market place.

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(2) We should sow seed by physical affection. Tender touching one by the other is very important. There should be a time of holding hands, of embracing, and of kissing (either a peck on the cheek or a long passionate kiss). This does not nor should not always lead to the bed room. (3) The husband should do his "honey-do-list". He should plan to do things to please his wife. This would include home and auto repairs about which the wife may feel insecure. The wife can help usually by making a physical list, allowing the husband time to work it into his schedule. The wife should also be conscious of her husband's priorities of house cleaning. She may plant the good seed by fixing him his favorite meal.

Third, we may sow the seed of time. A couple needs to plan quality time together. (1) A couple should plan to go on dates together (both with and without the kids). The date does not necessarily have to be elaborate. They may just go get a sandwich together or a drive out into the country. They may go window shopping together. (2) The key here is to plan time together. (3) The couple should plan specific activities together. (1) Have a time of daily devotionals together. (2) Spend time in prayer together. (3) Spend time sharing truths of the Word together. One may chase a thousand, but two can put ten thousand to flight (Deuteronomy 33:30). There is a multiplication in spiritual strength. "Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour" (Ecclesiastes 4:9).

Fourth, we are to sow the proper attitudes. (1) The husband, especially, is to be gentle with his wife. He should treat her tenderly. (2) The husband should also demonstrate courage. The wife will often mirror her husband's attitudes back to him. (3) The wife is to be supportive of her husband even when he makes the wrong decision. This is not to say that she is to support the wrong decision, but support him. (4) Both the husband and the wife are to have a forgiving attitude one toward the other. (5) Both are also to have a peaceful attitude. (6) Both are to have a patient attitude. (7) Both are to have a loving attitude.

Fifth, we are to sow gifts of blessings. When was the last time that you gave your spouse a gift that he or she did not ask for? It is God-like to give. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Again, Jesus gave us the principle of sowing. "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Luke 6:38). Gifts are great way to communicate LOVE to others. Even when you spouse is angry, sometimes a gift will help smooth things over. "A gift in secret pacifieth anger; and a reward in the bosom strong wrath" (Proverbs 21:14). What gift would really bless your spouse?

We should also recognize that different people respond differently to the various seed that is planted in their lives. One may respond more positively to gifts of blessings while another may respond more to quality time together. Remember also in the natural it takes time for seed to germinate, sprout, and grow before one see the harvest.

We must understand that God is responsible for the harvest. We can't make the harvest happen. That is God's responsibility. "When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him" (Proverbs 16:7). "Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of our righteousness" (II Corinthians 9:10). Don't wait! Begin to sow good seed today. The sooner you begin, the sooner your harvest. Amen! "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (II Corinthians 9:6).

Finally, we are to understand that it is God that builds the house. We can not do that which only God can do. He is the one who establishes security, love, and peace in a home. "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (Psalm 127:1).