
Stay the Course — and Your Harvest is Guaranteed!

This is the month when people around the world celebrate the new year. At this time, millions of people are thinking about changes they need to make in their lives as they begin a brand-new year. I think we all know that this is also a time when many people will make resolutions to change things about their lives, but many of those resolutions will not be kept or acted on. Without the commitment to follow through on the changes they want to make or the desired outcomes they want to see, they will likely fall short of their goals and be disappointed.

That may not sound very positive, but I want to encourage you that the opposite is true too. When you sow time and commitment into a desired result you want to achieve, it's right for you to expect change and to be rewarded (see 2 Timothy 2:6). It can take really hard work to do what God has asked you to do. But whether you've "labored" with forgiving someone who's wronged you, with believing for finances or some other blessing, or with just being faithful at the assignment He has given you, God will always reward you for being faithful and for pushing forward in faith and patience in your work for Him.

Galatians 6:9 says, "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Each seed sown has its own set season — or a specific, individual time — when it will produce a harvest. Well, that's important to know when you've sown a seed and you're waiting in faith for that seed to produce a visible return in your life!

Today I want to encourage you so that you will not miss the fixed, guaranteed time of your own harvest. Galatians 6:9 says, "...Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

The words "we shall reap" are from the Greek word *therismos*, a word that describes the reaping or harvesting of crops. What is important to note is that the Greek tense describes a future, fixed event. Hence, the harvest — the time of reaping — is in the future, but it is fixed and guaranteed to happen if we will do our part and stay on course.

That is why Paul continued by saying, "...if we faint not." The word "if" tells us our actions have the power to disrupt a harvest — just as I twice disrupted the reaping of my corn crop! Paul added the word "if" to help us understand that our consistency and refusal to surrender for any reason are vital in reaching the set season of our harvest. If we "faint" at any point along the way, we can jeopardize the long-term harvest of what we have sown.

The word "faint" is the Greek word *ekluo*, a compound of the words *ek* and *luo*. The word *ek* means out, and the word *luo* means to loosen or to relax. When compounded, the new word means to loosen out. It denotes a relaxed mental state that results in loss, and it depicts a person who has become so weary that he gives up and forfeits what he had long awaited and was so close to reaping. As a result, the person loses the desired result that was so near. Pressures applied against this person have "unraveled" him. As a result, his grip has slackened until the answer he has held on to and hoped for slips from his hands. The result is loss. In the case of Galatians 6:9, he has lost a harvest.

The most common factor that causes us to loosen our grip is when we become "weary." Thus, Paul urges us not to give in and quit in times of spiritual, mental, or physical exhaustion.

It's exciting to plant seeds of faith, and it's really exciting when it's time for harvest — when your faith finally manifests in the physical realm! But in order to reach that point, you must hold tightly to what God has told you and remember that your seed — whether it's the Word of God, financial seed, or seeds of uninterrupted, useful deeds toward others — has a set season when it will produce if you do not disrupt the process. As long as you stay

the course, it is guaranteed that you will reap from what you have planted, or sown.

Many people have consistently sown their finances or kind actions toward others. Often they are tempted to quit just because they become tired. Although they are trying to be obedient, they may feel unappreciated. Or perhaps circumstances out of their control are coming against them, or someone is treating them unjustly.

Maybe you have experienced the temptation to give up and faint. But Galatians 6:9 urges you not to loosen your grip on your future, fixed harvest! If you will remain steadfast, the time of waiting will eventually end and your harvest will come! It may not come at the time you were hoping it would arrive — but, regardless, don't dig up your seed or pull the ears of corn off the stalks too early! The seeds you have sown have a set season for producing a harvest for you, and God promises they will produce if you won't disrupt the process!

I don't know what you're trusting God for right now. Most of us are believing for something and are sowing seeds toward the fulfillment of our dreams. Perhaps no one but you knows the petition you have brought before God — you've kept it private, between just you and the Lord. Maybe you're awaiting a financial harvest, a breakthrough in a relationship, a physical or emotional healing, or restoration in some other area.

Perhaps your harvest is taking longer than you'd anticipated. I want to reassure you that God's Word and His promises are eternal — and if you just won't quit, it's only a matter of time until your long-awaited blessing arrives. God's Word is absolutely true, so I encourage you to remain steadfast and keep thanking Him for the harvest He has in store that's been tailor-made just for you!

Let me conclude by asking you the following questions. I encourage you to set aside time to carefully review them and write down your answers.

Have you been tempted to become impatient as you wait for your seed to be multiplied back to you as a harvest?

Have you ever dug up your seeds sown and ruined a harvest?

Have you ever been so impatient (like me as a young boy), that you pulled your ears of corn off the stalk, peeled back the husks, and destroyed your own harvest?

What did you learn from that experience, and how has that affected the way you've been waiting for your harvests — your due seasons — ever since?

List the ways you have already received a harvest on past seeds and deeds you've sown. It will both surprise and encourage you to see how much of a harvest you have already reaped from seeds you've sown in the past! Seeds mature at varying times. Think about the fact that it just may not be time for some of the seeds you've sown to mature. If your seeds have been in the soil a long time, it's likely that your harvest is not far away. Determine what your position of faith and patience will look like until you see the fulfillment of your desire or dream.

Rick Renner