



June 15, 2014

The Sow / Reap Principle

Esther 7

Discuss: What gardening experience have you had? Have you ever planted a seed not knowing what kind it was? Explain.

The story so far:

We've seen God's sovereign hand working behind the scenes in the book of Esther. After Esther's first banquet with the king and Haman, the king could not sleep. His servant read to him the record of Mordecai saving the king's life by uncovering a plot. The king directed unhappy Haman to honor his enemy, Mordecai.

Read Esther 7:1-10.

At Esther's second banquet, King Xerxes repeats his generous offer to Queen Esther for the third time (see also 5:3, 6). It would seem as if Esther has King Xerxes in the palm of her hand.

[Q] Queen Esther's explanation (7:4, 6) is in the passive voice, demonstrating good judgment considering the circumstances. Why is it a good idea for her to choose her words carefully?

[Q] Why is letting the truth be known more important to Esther than even her own life? What are the stakes?

[Q] How does Esther demonstrate 1 John 3:18 and Ephesians 4:15?

Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. 1 John 3:18 NIV

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.
Ephesians 4:15 NIV

Apply:

[Q] What might it look like to be a person who values truth?

[Q] How highly do you value truth? How can you grow your love of truth?

Sow and Reap

The beginning of the reversal of Haman's expected fortune hit hard in the last chapter, but the specifics come through vividly chapter 7. What he thought started out as a bad day just gets worse and worse.

[Q] What specific elements in the story are reversed (see Esther 3:1, 5; 5:14; 6:4)?

Read Galatians 6:7-8 and Proverbs 22:8. This unchanging principle of sowing and reaping is illustrated throughout the Bible and it applies to both believers and unbelievers.

[Q] What did Haman sow and what did he reap?

[Q] According to Isaiah 53:4-6, how did Jesus Christ reap what we have sown?

[Q] According to 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Galatians 6:8, what do we now reap? What is your response?

Apply:

[Q] Have you trusted Jesus to bear God's wrath for you?

[Q] Are there areas in your life where you have reaped trouble by your own sowing? Explain if appropriate.

[Q] The Spirit of God Himself is the one who helps us to sow to please the Spirit (Galatians 6:8). What help do you need to ask from Him as you think about sowing good seeds?

Galatians 6:9-10 reminds us: *Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. ¹⁰ So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.* (NIV)

Pray
