

Hard Truths – Week 5 – Consequences – Bible Study Helps

Title: Consequences

Sermon Summary:

This sermon addresses a critical truth that older generations understand but younger believers often struggle to grasp: choices have lasting consequences that follow us throughout life. Using the biblical principle of sowing and reaping from Galatians 6:7-8, the sermon explains that while repentance restores our relationship with God and brings forgiveness, it does not always erase the consequences of our actions. The message emphasizes that this is a universal spiritual law—what we sow, we will reap, whether good or bad. Through the example of David's sin with Bathsheba, the sermon illustrates how one poor decision can trigger a domino effect of consequences that last for years or even a lifetime. However, the message also offers hope: just as we reap corruption when we sow to the flesh, we reap spiritual life and blessings when we sow to the Spirit. The sermon challenges believers to think carefully about the seeds they are planting daily through their choices, relationships, habits, and spiritual disciplines.

Key Points:

- The law of sowing and reaping is universal and applies to everyone, believers and unbelievers alike
- Repentance restores our relationship with God but does not always remove the consequences of our actions
- Small seeds can produce large harvests—both positive and negative
- Consequences often come over time, which can deceive people into thinking they are getting away with sin
- David's story demonstrates how one sinful choice led to multiple bad decisions and lasting consequences including the death of his child, family violence, rebellion, and public shame
- Despite forgiveness, David still reaped what he had sown
- The principle works both ways: sowing righteousness produces spiritual fruit, joy, restored relationships, and maturity
- Sin's pleasure is temporary, but its harvest may be permanent
- Early obedience is easier than late repair
- Every daily choice is planting a seed: what we click online, who we spend time with, how we treat authority, our spiritual habits, and our words
- You cannot change yesterday's seeds, but you can plant different seeds today

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Scripture Reference:

- Galatians 6:7-8 (primary focus)
- Psalm 10:3-6, 11
- Psalm 64:1-5
- Psalm 73:1-12
- Psalm 94:7
- Ecclesiastes 8:11
- 2 Samuel 11 (David and Bathsheba narrative)
- Psalm 51 (David's repentance)
- Hebrews 11:24-25
- 1 John 1:9
- Romans 6:1-2

Stories:

- David and Bathsheba: The detailed account of how David's evening walk led to adultery, deception, and murder, followed by deep repentance but lasting consequences
- The pastor's personal testimony of being lost and invited to church by Melanie (his future wife), and how his children might misunderstand the lesson from that story
- The illustration of farmers understanding that seeds disappear temporarily but always produce a harvest larger than the seed planted
- The analogy of dominoes falling to represent how one bad decision leads to another
- The car maintenance illustration: ignoring the oil change light leads to expensive engine repairs
- The landscaping metaphor: a small weed easy to pull becomes a major problem if left unattended
- The gas station energy drink example of young people making choices without considering long-term health consequences
- The Nazarene church friend who feared losing salvation versus sinning expecting no consequences

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Discipleship Questions

How does the principle that 'choices do not stay in the past' challenge the way you currently make daily decisions, both small and large?

In what ways might we be deceiving ourselves that God is not watching our actions, similar to the wicked people described in the Psalms?

David experienced God's forgiveness but still faced severe consequences for his sins. How does this reality affect your understanding of repentance and grace?

What 'dominoes' in your life might already be set up that could lead to a chain reaction of negative consequences if you make one wrong choice?

The sermon mentions that early obedience is easier than late repair. What areas of your life need immediate attention before the consequences become irreversible?

How can believers practically help younger generations understand the long-term consequences of sin without simply imposing rules?

What does it mean to 'sow to the Spirit' in practical, everyday terms, and what specific seeds are you planting today?

Why do you think people continue in patterns of sin and repentance, believing there will be no lasting consequences despite what Scripture clearly teaches?

How does the reality that 'you cannot change yesterday's seed, but you can plant different today' offer both warning and hope for your current situation?

In what ways might modern technology and social media be causing us to sow destructive seeds without recognizing the future harvest we are creating?

Small Group Guide: Consequences - The Law of Sowing and Reaping

Scripture Focus: Galatians 6:7-8

Opening Prayer

Begin by asking God to open hearts and minds to His truth, and to give wisdom as the group discusses the serious topic of consequences and the principle of sowing and reaping.

Ice Breaker (5-10 minutes)

Question: Share about a time when you learned an important life lesson from someone older than you. How did their experience help you avoid a mistake?

Key Takeaways from the Sermon

1. **The Universal Law:** "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7) - This is not a suggestion but a fixed law like gravity.
 2. **Repentance Restores Relationship, Not All Consequences:** God forgives us completely, but seeds planted still produce harvests.
 3. **The Law Works Both Ways:** Sowing to the flesh brings corruption; sowing to the Spirit brings life everlasting.
 4. **Small Seeds, Big Harvests:** A moment of anger, a hidden sin, or a careless decision can shape an entire future.
 5. **Early Obedience is Easier Than Late Repair:** It's far less costly to obey God now than to repair damage later.
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Discussion Questions

Understanding the Principle (15 minutes)

1. **Read Galatians 6:7-8 together.** Why do you think the Holy Spirit starts this teaching with "Be not deceived"? What deception is He warning against?

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2. The sermon mentioned that "choices do not stay in the past—they follow us." Can you think of biblical examples (besides David) where this principle played out?
3. How does our culture today promote the lie that "there are no consequences" or "you can do whatever you want"?

David's Story (15 minutes)

4. **Read 2 Samuel 11:1-5.** What were the "dominoes" in David's story? At what points could he have stopped the progression?
5. David was forgiven (Psalm 51), yet faced severe consequences (death of his child, family violence, rebellion). How does this challenge our understanding of forgiveness?
6. The sermon mentioned that David brought others into his sin (Joab, messengers, etc.). How do our "private" sins often affect others?

Personal Application (15 minutes)

7. **The sermon asked: "What seed am I planting?"** Take a moment to reflect silently: What areas of your life right now are planting good seeds? What areas might be planting seeds of future problems?
8. The sermon mentioned several modern examples of "seeds":
 - What you click online
 - Who you spend time with
 - How you respect authority
 - Your spiritual habits (Bible reading, prayer)
 - Your words to your spouse/family

Which of these areas is most challenging for you? Why?

9. **Read Hebrews 11:24-25.** Moses chose "to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." What pleasures are you most tempted to choose over obedience to God?

The Positive Side (10 minutes)

10. The sermon emphasized that sowing to the Spirit produces good harvests too. What are some "good seeds" you've planted in the past that you're now reaping benefits from?
11. What would it look like in your daily life to intentionally sow seeds of righteousness? Be specific.

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge:

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Choose **ONE** area to focus on this week:

Option 1: Audit Your Seeds

- Make a list of your daily habits and activities
- Label each one: "Sowing to the Flesh" or "Sowing to the Spirit"
- Identify one negative seed to eliminate and one positive seed to plant

Option 2: Build a Boundary

- Identify one area where you're vulnerable to sowing bad seeds
- Create a specific boundary (accountability, removing temptation, etc.)
- Share this boundary with one trusted person for accountability

Option 3: Plant Good Seeds Intentionally

- Choose one relationship that needs encouragement
- Commit to speaking positive, biblical words daily
- Spend time in God's Word specifically for that relationship

Option 4: Share Your Testimony

- If you're in the "older generation," invite a younger person to coffee
- Share honestly about consequences you've faced from past choices
- Offer wisdom without being preachy

Reflection Questions for Personal Quiet Time

- What seeds did I plant today?
- Am I living as though God is not watching?
- What consequences am I currently experiencing from past choices?
- What good harvest am I experiencing from past obedience?
- Where do I need to repent and start planting different seeds today?

Scripture Memory

Galatians 6:7-8 - "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

Closing Prayer Points

- Confession of areas where we've been sowing to the flesh
 - Thanksgiving for God's forgiveness and grace
 - Wisdom to see the long-term consequences of our daily choices
 - Strength to plant good seeds consistently
 - Protection from deception that says "there are no consequences"
 - For anyone struggling with the harvest of past bad seeds
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Leader Notes

Be Sensitive To:

- Group members who may be dealing with serious consequences from past sins
- The balance between conviction and condemnation
- Those who may feel hopeless about past mistakes
- The need to emphasize God's forgiveness alongside consequences

Emphasize:

- It's never too late to start planting good seeds
- God's grace is sufficient even when consequences remain
- The positive side: sowing righteousness produces good harvests
- We're all in this together—we all struggle with the flesh

Follow Up: Consider checking in with group members mid-week about their chosen practical application. A simple text can provide encouragement and accountability.

"You cannot change yesterday's seed, but you can plant different today." - Amen!

5-Day Devotional: Seeds of Eternity

Day 1: The Law That Never Fails

Reading: Galatians 6:7-9

Devotional: God's law of sowing and reaping is as fixed as gravity. When we plant a seed, it disappears temporarily but never permanently—it always produces a harvest. This divine principle applies to every area of life. The choices we make today, the words we speak, the habits we form—all are seeds being planted. Some produce beautiful harvests of righteousness, while others yield corruption and pain. The encouraging truth is that this law works both ways. When we sow obedience, purity, and faithfulness to God's Word, we plant seeds that will yield spiritual fruit, restored relationships, and lasting joy. Don't be deceived—God is not mocked. Your seeds will produce a harvest.

Reflection: What seeds are you planting today in your relationships, spiritual habits, and daily choices?

Day 2: The Hidden Cost of Secret Sin

Reading: Psalm 10:1-11; Psalm 94:7-11

Devotional: The wicked man says in his heart, "God has forgotten. He will never see it." This is the great deception that leads to destruction. We convince ourselves that private choices remain private, that hidden sins stay hidden. But God sees everything. David learned this devastating truth when one evening of poor judgment cascaded into adultery, deception, and murder. Each bad decision made the next one easier, like dominoes falling in sequence. The lie whispers, "Just this once. No one will know." But consequences don't stay in the past—they follow us, sometimes for years. Early obedience is always easier than late repair. What seems hidden today will be revealed tomorrow.

Reflection: Are there areas of your life where you're believing the lie that God isn't watching?

Day 3: Repentance Restores, But Consequences Remain

Reading: 2 Samuel 11:1-17; Psalm 51:1-12

Devotional: David's broken cry in Psalm 51 reveals a man desperate for God's forgiveness: "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin." And God did forgive him—completely and fully. The blood covers. Our relationship with God is restored through

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genuine repentance. But forgiveness doesn't erase all consequences. David's child died. Violence came to his house. His family was divided. The sword never departed from his household. This is the hard truth the older generation knows: you can be forgiven and still live with the harvest of past choices. But here's the hope—God redeems even our broken harvests when we turn to Him with humble hearts.

Reflection: Have you confused God's forgiveness with the removal of all consequences? How can you accept both truths?

Day 4: The Freedom of a Clean Conscience

Reading: Hebrews 11:24-26; 1 John 1:9

Devotional: Moses chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." He understood what many miss: sin's pleasure is brief, but its harvest may last a lifetime. The devil offers temporary satisfaction in exchange for permanent bondage. But one of the greatest blessings of walking in obedience is the freedom of a clean conscience. When you're saved, you're free—why would you ever go back to slavery? The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin, giving us the power to say no to temptation. Before you click, before you speak, before you act—remember the harvest. A clear conscience is worth more than any fleeting pleasure.

Reflection: What "pleasures of sin for a season" are you tempted to trade for your freedom in Christ?

Day 5: Today's Seeds, Tomorrow's Harvest

Reading: Galatians 6:8-10; Proverbs 4:23-27

Devotional: You cannot change yesterday's seed, but you can plant differently today. This is the hope that breaks through every regret. Whether you're young and just beginning or older and carrying consequences from past choices, today is a new opportunity to sow righteousness. Every word of encouragement plants a good seed. Every moment in God's Word plants truth. Every act of obedience plants spiritual fruit. The harvest is always bigger than the seed—so plant wisely. Build boundaries. Choose godly friends. Guard what you watch and where you click. Ask yourself: "What seed am I planting right now?" The older generation says, "I wish I had known." You do know. Plant good seeds today.

Reflection: What specific good seeds will you intentionally plant today in your spiritual life, relationships, and habits?