

On The Frontier

“For the glory of God and the furtherance of the Gospel”

And Justice For All

by Linus A. Mathis III

Life, it seems, is becoming increasingly unfair these days. The corrupt are celebrated for their cunning while the honorable are defamed. For all appearances the only ones to suffer loss or penalty are those who have been victimized. Worldly justice systems have become so degenerate that they do more to protect the guilty than the innocent. Quite often the offense persists, unpunished. Every thing looks like it has been designed to permit the offender to remain unscathed. Meanwhile, the rest of us look on in disbelief and horror as an anguished cry for justice rises from deep within our souls.

Is there no justice? Yes! There is. Take solace in this old adage, "The wheels of God may grind slowly, but they do grind finely." Better yet, let's go to the Scriptures for some real strength and comfort.

Galatians 6:7,8

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth [plants], that shall he also reap [harvest].

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.

We have a choice as to what kind of crops we want, corrupt or everlasting. It's all contingent upon the seed that we sow (plant). The

Devil knows this and hates both God and mankind. This is why he tempts people to sow to the flesh. His attacks are often twofold. The second barb of this one is, perhaps, more devilish than the first. That is, he gets Christians so disgusted with fleshly people that they cease their own godly service. This makes for a sad termination of a most needed ministry.

These next verses give wonderful encouragement:

Galatians 6:9,10

And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Does life ever present you with opportunities to do good?

Sowing and reaping are unerring principles that God has established, they work for all of us. This is why God is not mocked. The insolent may think they are getting away with something, but they are not. It's not my desire to bore you with common sayings but, "What goes around comes around." Sure, what a man sows he reaps! He may not remember sowing a particular seed but that won't change the outcome.

Last year my wife forgot that she had planted a certain vegetable in our garden. The ground produced scallions just the same. She then took

credit for having planted them. An evil man might never put two and two together. He doles out evil and receives evil in return. But he's never able to acknowledge the real culprit. Himself! Talk about poetic justice!!!

Lest I forget, this principle works with positive seeds too. In fact, when we plant godly seeds we can expect a bumper crop.

Luke 6:38

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure [*metron* - portion measured], pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure [*metron* - portion measured] that ye mete withal [*metreo* - measure out] it shall be measured [*antimetreo* - measured back, repaid] to you again.

Years ago I learned this verse in light of tithes, offerings and plurality giving. While it's true that God blesses our financial giving in wonderful ways, that's not the sole premise of this verse. The essence is; with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again. What ever it is, it gets repaid. Put in context with the preceding verse we see that this principle affects more than finances. You might also notice that this verse is specific in, ". . . shall men give unto your bosom."

Verse 37:

Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive,

and ye shall be forgiven:

What we give out we get back. God is not mocked, a man sows what he reaps. Some people call this the law of retribution. I don't care for that. Retribution communicates the punitive. This wonderful principle works equally well in bringing about godly results. If you plant a good seed you will get a good crop. Or, a GREAT seed, a GREAT crop!

Those of you who are parents might want to consider presenting this to your children. Teach them ASAP to apply this principle so they can begin to plant good seeds and thus enjoy the fruit of a godly labor. I don't know about you but when I first became a Christian I had acres of weeds to contend with. This can be avoided if you're taught properly. You'll find also that application of this principle is complimentary to accountability. After all, our little ones need to be taught to be responsible.

Responsibility doesn't occur naturally as an inherited trait or characteristic. Responsibility must be learned. It behooves us therefore to understand this principle at as early an age as possible. Fruits and vegetables are superior to thorns and thistles any day. God in His wisdom has made it so that absolutely no deed goes unnoticed. Be it good or bad.

Lest I forget, there is a fabulous orientalism (an eastern figure or expression based upon cultural peculiarities) in verse 38 for us to understand. *Pressed down and shaken together and running over.* This refers to the magnificent abundance found in the return of our giving investment. At the time of this Bible record the people went to the market place to buy provisions. When buying

grain, for instance, the merchant would use a measuring device to fill his customers sack. Much like we might use a grain or flour scoop. In other words, a vessel used as a measuring device. After filling the sack with the grain he would shake its contents down by vigorously moving the sack from side to side. Then after the grain settled, he'd add more and repeat the process. Next he would press down the grain to fit in yet more. Finally, to give his buyer a good measure, he would continue to pour the grain in until the grain was overflowing the sack. Certainly the patron had nothing to complain about! He received a great deal for his purchase.

You and I may not get this kind of deal when we go to market. We are, perhaps, used to the cereal box that is less than full. In fact, you will find a statement on most products to obviate this apparent lack. Something like, "contents may settle during shipping." Right! You have this large box with 15 oz (456 g) in it. Which is not quite a pound, but the box is capable of holding much more than a pound. Likewise with coffee. In times past I bought coffee in a pound can. Nowadays, though the can is the same, there's only 13 oz in it. Need I add that it's more expensive? Less for more seems to be the agenda. With the cereal, you've got a big box but you spent too much for it and you have to run your arm down to the elbow to reach the cereal. Well, this was not the case in the eastern market place. Just the opposite was true. This is the example God is giving us to demonstrate how abundant our returns are when we give. Whatever it is that we give. Or plant.

If I plant good seed I can expect a

high volume return. The point is, though, the return is based upon my planting. Therefore, we would be well advised to plant that which produces the best for us. Namely, the things of God as described to us in His Word. If otherwise, we can expect consequence rather than result.

By now you're probably wondering how forgiveness fits in with all of this. That really is quite simple. Forgiveness and consequence are two totally different matters. You see, God can forgive me, but I may still have to face the consequences of my actions. For instance, say I get a credit card and max it out. This puts me deeply into debt. Lust was my motivation so now I have a problem. I've lusted and that's a sin. I am in debt as well. Eventually I come to myself and go to God for forgiveness. I admit to Him that I've walked in darkness and want to repent. God of course forgives me. Not only does He forgive me of my sin but He cleanses me from all unrighteousness (I John 1:9, Psalm 103:6-14, etc.). He no longer remembers my sin. But the credit card company does. I'm forgiven, but I still have a debt to pay. The consequence of my action has reached me and will be with me until it is justified. So it is with most things. We can be forgiven but there may still be consequences. Please note that this is NOT God punishing us. NO! It's the crop from the seed that WE have sown. This works both for good and bad. Bad seed, bad crop. Good seed, good crop. This works the same for saint and sinner. God is no respecter of person (II Chronicles 19:7; Job 34:19; Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11; Matthew 5:45b; etc.). We all get the same deal. This is just, this is godly. There is justice and it is blind. It doesn't play

favorites, nor does God.

Any gardener can tell you that seeds do not grow overnight. So it is with the return on our words and deeds. We may not see their effect immediately but given time they are sure to sprout. The carnal man's ignorance in these matters has paved the way for evil men to rise up and speak perverse things. (As if we didn't have enough of them already!) They, these evil men, have used this ignorance to mislead the simple (including the child of God). Make no mistake, they will receive the fruit of their doings.

Isaiah 5:18-24

Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope [That's quite a mind picture, isn't it?]:

That say, Let him make speed, *and* hasten his work, that we may see *it*: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know *it*!

Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

Woe unto *them that are* wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!

Woe unto *them that are* mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink:

Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

Therefore as the fire devoureth

the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, *so* their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

It's significant to note that it isn't just deeds that are repaid.

Matthew 12:37

For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

Words or deeds, they are all significant. Nothing goes unnoticed!

Matthew 12:36

But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

Praise God that you and I have been judged to be righteous in Christ Jesus! Our salvation is NOT determined by our works (Ephesians 2:5-9), it is a free gift (Romans 3:24; Titus 3:5; II Timothy 1:9,10; etc.). However, our eternal rewards are based upon our actions. Reward is by merit, whereas salvation is by grace.

I Corinthians 3:11-15

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of

what sort it is.

If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

The fire of the Day of the Lord shall determine the worth of work. Work that is profitable for eternity (like leading someone to Christ) shall survive. Therefore, that work shall be rewarded. But, work which is not profitable for eternity (man-made buildings, systems, religions, and all manner of fleshly pursuits) shall perish. Perishable and ineffectual for eternity, thus not fit for reward. Salvation is a result of the work of Jesus Christ and you can be assured that it will withstand eternity. The Lord's work is worthy of inestimable reward. Our salvation will endure forever. That's why it's called everlasting or eternal life. You will notice that this passage in Corinthians never mentions the man himself being in jeopardy, only his work. In fact, it specifically says, ". . . but he himself shall be saved."

Should you find yourself asking, "Is there no Justice?" Be assured, there is! The answer for those of us who have been disgruntled by all of the presumable injustice which has surrounded us is simple. Our allegiance must be to God and it is to Him that we look for justice. He is the only Judge and Lawgiver, there is no other. Don't look to the police or the justice system. Our government isn't going to provide us with satisfactory solutions. They don't need to, God already has. There is justice for all and the

process through which it comes is irrevocable. That being the case we may do as the following passage commands:

Romans 12:19

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

In the future we Christians should pledge ourselves in the following manner:

I pledge myself to the One True God
And to His Son Jesus Christ
And to His Word
for which He stands
One family under God, indivisible,
With liberty, love
and justice for all.

Yes, and JUSTICE for ALL.

The Counselor's Corner

With Rev. Linus A. Mathis III

The Importance Of Accountability

The words we speak and the actions we take contribute significantly to the character of our children. A child's conscience is built by the values he has been taught and the actions he has observed in those who teach him. We as parents must line our actions up with our words. It's imperative that our children develop a wholesome view of life and the world around them. If our children are to grow into men and women of integrity, WE must live by the standards we teach them. The adult must be held to the same demands for accountability as the child.

That being said, it's obvious we live in a world which is becoming more irresponsible with each passing day. However, the "world" should not be our example for right conduct. If you must use the world as a behavioral teaching model, use it to demonstrate wrong behavior. Some find it helpful to teach "What it is Not!" before teaching "What it Is! Any sound thinking human will agree that modern society has failed miserably in providing an acceptable example of responsibility. The search for a role model should begin at home. An old boss of mine used to say, "The fish stinks from the head down." And one of our greatest statesmen said, "The buck stops here."

Presupposing that the adults are taking responsibility for their words and deeds, we may now move on to the child. It's a bad lesson indeed when the parent makes an excuse for the child's ill conduct. This sort of thing only fosters weakness of character and desensitizes the conscience. In fact, the child can begin to think that there's more to be gained from bad conduct than good. After all, it's alleged that most Americans are more interested in the Gross National Product than morality and honesty. So, it would be a simple matter for a child to draw a similar conclusion. Especially since immaturity and selfishness are bed fellows.

The truth is:

Proverbs 28:6

Better *is* the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than *he that is* perverse *in his* ways, though he *be* rich.

Now that may not agree with "conventional wisdom" but it's the

Word of God. Which would you prefer for your child? If the latter is your answer than it's vital that you hold your little ones accountable for their words and deeds. It'll build for them a solid sense of right and wrong. They'll grow up having exceptional character. Nevertheless, this all begins with mom and dad.

Proverbs 20:7

The just *man* walketh in his integrity: his children *are* blessed after him.

Our society has moved so far away from these things that most people don't even know what integrity is anymore. They think that it's okay to lie at times. But of course only to save yourself. I mean, who wouldn't do that? Let me ask you, is it okay for your kids to lie to you? How about to cover their own misdeeds? But of course only to protect their own interests. That would be okay. Right? Wrong! Under no circumstance is it acceptable to lie. If personal accountability were taken seriously, none of us would ever lie. There would be no reason to. We wouldn't make excuses either. They only satisfy the one giving them. No, we would quickly and emphatically admit to our mistakes. In doing so we would also avoid the inevitable calamities brought about by deceit. Just tell the truth, all the time and every time. Your children and everyone else will respect you for it. If you do, you can expect the same from them. When they get older they'll have no problem confiding in your counsel, because they'll know you have integrity.

Whether we like it or not we receive either consequences or results for the things we do in life. Why not teach this to your children? It's the truth!

You'll have a crop of whatever it is that you plant. You might as well plant the right seeds so you can the enjoy the harvest of your choice. Weeds or vegetables, it's up to you!

Galatians 6:7-9

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.

And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

Perhaps you've heard it said, "What goes around comes around." If that's true we owe it to our little ones to teach them what to plant. That also means they must understand that they're responsible for what grows in their garden. If you plant weeds it's up to you to remove them, or watch them choke your fruitfulness. You can't blame others for what grows in your soil. Accountability is important!

-"The Counselor's Corner" also appears in Alaska Parenting Magazine in an edited version under a different title"-
