

Sowing and Reaping

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Galatians: Free At Last Series

Galatians 6: 6-10

John Wooden, the former UCLA coach- who built one of the greatest sports dynasties in the history of any sport- died this past weekend at the age of 99. He is the only person inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame as both a player and a coach. Wooden is on the “Mount Rushmore” of coaches in any sport. If we think about the greatest American coaches of all-time, who would be on the Mount Rushmore of coaches, we certainly would have John Wooden there, alongside of maybe Vince Lombardi of the Green Bay Packers, and Red Auerbach, from the Boston Celtics. What was most impressive this past week has been the outpouring of praise for John Wooden, not just for his coaching and athletic success, but for his character and his life. Even the President paid tribute to Coach Wooden.

President Obama, in a statement last week saluted “the way he achieved all that success- with modesty and humility, and by wholeheartedly dedicating his life to the betterment of others. Even after he became one of the games early heroes, he worked as a high school teacher. And for the rest of this life, on and off the court, he never stopped teaching. He never stopped preparing his players, and everyone he met to be their very best.” Virtually everyone who ever played for Coach Wooden, and many who just got to spend an hour with him on one occasion, testify to the impact of John Wooden on their lives.

A funeral is always an opportunity to reflect on what makes for a successful or unsuccessful life. There is no shortage of John Wooden sayings that made the rounds far from the basketball court, but one of them was: “Learn as if you were to live forever; live as if you were to die tomorrow.”

Wooden grew up poor on a farm in Indiana. He learned from his dad the value of discipline and hard work. He had a great marriage to his wife Nell for 53 years, the only woman he ever dated. When she died, he wrote a letter to her on the 21st day of each month, for the next quarter of a century. She died on the 21st of April, back in 1985. One of the most touching things I’ve ever heard from a married man was said by Coach Wooden when he was dying. He told the nurses in the hospital that when he died he wanted to be clean shaven so he would look nice when he met his wife Nell in heaven.

He read the Bible every day. He loved God. Why did John Wooden have so many National titles? How did he garner so much respect? He instilled incredible discipline in his players and he taught his players to always put the team before their own interests.

When Bill Walton, who was one of the great college players of all-time, showed up at a practice with a full beard in violation of team rules, and insisted that it was his right to wear his beard any way he felt like it, John Wooden did not argue with him. All Coach said was, “You know I admire people who have strong beliefs and stick by them. We’re all going to miss you.” Twenty minutes later Walton came back clean shaven.

What I see in John Woodens’ life and the life of other good men and women who lived admirably and who died well is the Biblical principle of sowing and reaping. The Bible says that we reap what we sow. I’ve been doing a series from the book of Galatians for the past several months. As the Apostle Paul concludes this wonderful letter, he offers a series of admonitions to the church in Galatia; the most important of which is about sowing and reaping. That’s the title of today’s talk. Let’s pray.

Galatians 6: 6-10

6 Nevertheless, those who receive instruction in the word should share all good things with their instructor. 7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. People reap what they sow. 8 Those who sow to please their sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; those who sow to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. 9 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 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

In verse 7 we read about the general principle of sowing and reaping.

General Principle of sowing and reaping

The Apostle Paul is giving us an image from agriculture in verse Galatians 6:7:

Galatians 6:7

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. People reap what they sow.

What this means is that God has created a universe of order and consistency. Life is not just a series of random, meaningless events. Written into this world morally, relationally, spiritually and in a very significant measure, materially is this principle of sowing and reaping. If a farmer wants a harvest, he or she must sow seed in a field otherwise there will be no harvest.

Now in farming, the principle of sowing and reaping applies to the kind of harvest that will be reaped. If you sow barley, you’re not going to reap corn; you’re going to reap barley. And negatively, if you sow wild oats, you’re not going to reap a crop of strawberries. The kind of harvest that you reap will be determined by what you sow. And the quality and quantity of the harvest is also determined by this principle of sowing and reaping. If you sow bad seed, you can’t expect to

have good fruit. Good seed will produce a good crop; bad seed will produce a bad crop. And if you work hard and you plant seed abundantly, you will have a huge harvest. But if you sleep through planting season, and nonchalantly toss a few handfuls of seed out in a field, you will have a very sparse harvest. So if you want a bumper crop, of a certain type of wheat you need to choose the right kind of seed, you need to have the right quality and you need to sow that seed plentifully.

Now the Apostle Paul, who is writing this under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is not intending to teach us a lesson about farming. The Apostle Paul intends for us to learn a lesson about life. Paul uses these different pictures, these different metaphors, to encourage us towards success in life. In Galatians 5:16, the Apostle Paul said:

Galatians 5:16

So I say, walk in the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

If you want to know what life is about, Paul taught us in chapter 5, life is a walk. Right foot, left foot, right foot...If you want to make progress in an area, it's step by step, little by little. And he's making a similar point here about sowing and reaping. It's a life lesson; if you want to reap a great marriage you must sow seed that will result in a great marriage. Or for example, if you're single right now and you're dating, you might want to take classes from our marriage and family department. We have a class called How2become1 if you're thinking about marriage. If you're not quite there yet, we have a class called Dating without Drama. But you want to sow good habits now in your dating relationship, habits of resolving conflict and forgiveness, habits of honesty and sexual purity, that you will later reap if and when you get married.

If you want financial stability, if you don't want creditors calling your home and calling your cell phone and calling your parents, sow disciplined habits of spending now. Spend less, earn more. If you're undisciplined with your ATM card or your credit card, cut it up, get financial counseling here in the church. Sowing and reaping.

If you want to reap a warm relationship with God, sow into your relationship with God. Tomorrow morning get up and spend time with God. Get into the Bible, read it, meditate on what you're reading. Pray. Tuesday morning, get up and sow into your relationship with God. Wednesday morning, get up and sow into your relationship with God. If you want great friends, invest in friendships. Sow into your friends.

If you're in your 20's or your 30's and you do not want to have a midlife crisis, do a good job of sowing now. Sow into your relationships. Sow into your marriage, if you're married. Sow into friendships. Sow into your relationship with God.

Midlife crises are the result of bad sowing when we're young. You get to middle age and we say, "My best days are gone, I no longer have the attractive body I had when I was 20. My life feels empty. There is a huge hole inside of me. I need some excitement in my life." What if in midlife, you began to reap a decade or two decades or three decades or four decades of great sowing? What if when you hit 45 or 50, or 55 or 60, all the fruit began coming up, in your friendships, in your family, in your work, in your ministry? Sowing and reaping is a principle - a general principle of life.

The general principle of sowing and reaping applies to church. The Holy Spirit impressed this on me 15 or so years ago. I was praying for our church. The church was growing rapidly but we didn't have enough high quality leaders to care for all of the people who were coming to the church. And so I began praying, and I was quoting God's promises back to him, which is a good way to pray, and I said, "Lord, your word says the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the Harvest therefore to send out workers into the harvest field." "Lord you've given us this huge harvest but there are not enough workers. So, I'm asking you to send out workers; give us leaders who will be able to take care of this huge harvest." And I felt the Holy Spirit stop me short and in my heart I heard these words, "Rich you will not be able to reap where you haven't sown." And I began thinking about that.

And I realized that we were trying to have leaders but we weren't investing in creating leaders at Vineyard Columbus. And so that's when we started VLI, the Vineyard Leadership Institute, to invest in building church leaders and future pastors and future church planters, and missionaries. By the way, if you are thinking about future Christian leadership or you are a leader but you feel that what you know is a little thin, why not make the investment this year to sign up for Vineyard Leadership Institute, for VLI. Check it out on our website. Write to Danny Franz here at the church at danny.franz@vineyardcolumbus.org. Say I want to know more about VLI.

See the Apostle Paul gives us a general principle for life. And the principle of sowing and reaping applies to everything, to the company we keep, to the people we date, to the books we read. What you sow, you will reap. Life is not about just about consuming; life is about investing for the future in every area. Having stated the general principle let me warn you against the wrong application of sowing and reaping.

The wrong application of sowing and reaping.

Sowing and reaping is a general principle, it's a principle of what is typically the case. Let's not make it into an absolute iron clad rule, especially in a fallen world. Regarding success in business or even success in health or in marriage: You might be absolutely faithful; working hard and being smart with your business and be undercut by the recession that is outside of your control, which

cripples your main supplier or destroys your customer base. Or you may be subject to embezzlement or theft.

You might be a faithful and good spouse who sows well into your marriage, and your spouse may still choose to sin against you by cheating on their vows or being caught up in an addiction. You may get lung cancer without smoking a day in your life. You must be careful to apply the rule of sowing in reaping with wisdom and discernment.

The Book of Job stands in the center of the Bible, sounding a great warning siren against the unwise, undiscerning application of the general rule of sowing and reaping. Job's friends saw Job suffering. He had lost his property; lost his children and his health. His friends surrounded him with unwise counsel, saying to him, "...well Job, you're just reaping what you've sowed. If you would repent, God would bless your life again."

I believe this principle of sowing and reaping applies virtually absolutely when we're talking about character formation, when we're talking about the kind of person that you're going to be. Sowing and reaping applies virtually absolutely when we're talking about God's view of a successful life and it is a general rule about how life typically works, it's not an absolute rule.

Friends, you may be sowing well in your children, you might be sowing good seed in their life and yet they may choose to reach into another bag and sow weeds into their own lives. So be careful. We want to apply this principle with wisdom and discernment and if you don't know if you are applying appropriately, speak to a mature, thoughtful, kind Christian who has the courage to tell you the truth.

Most of us read about this principle of sowing and reaping and we experience it as frightening and really scary. You may be thinking to yourself: "My life stinks!"

I'm reading Galatians 6:7, which says:

Galatians 6:7

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. People reap what they sow.

The hopefulness of sowing and reaping.

Let's say, for the sake of argument that your life stinks now because you are reaping what you sowed. You have a low wage job because you chose to quit school and not get your degree, or you fooled around in school and you got low grades, you barely graduated. Let's say that you are reaping what you sowed; let's say you are divorced and alone because you cheated on your spouse or you

drank too much. Or you have an unhappy marriage because you have refused consistently to really invest in your marriage. You're harsh or distant or caught up in your work.

Let's say that you look at your life honestly, and before God you deeply believe that your present unhappiness is the direct result of reaping what you sowed in the past. Well this verse is one of the most hopeful verses in all of scripture, because what it makes us ask is: "What will I do today in terms of sowing for the future? How will I respond today concerning what I am reaping right now?"

These verses tell us that in contrast to every other religion, and every other philosophy, there are no determinisms in Christianity. You are free to choose the course of your life. You see, every other religion and philosophy outside of Christianity, essentially, teaches determinism.

It could be the philosophical determinism of Eastern religion. It's just your karma; you're simply living out the destiny determined for you by your past lives. The reason you're experiencing grinding poverty, or you live in a low caste, unhappy your whole life and you clean sewers has all been determined for you before you were ever born, its karma.

It's the stars and the movement of the stars, astrology is a form of determinism. You have no power over your date of birth or the stars and planetary movement.

It's the will of Allah, according to Islam.

In Marxism there is economic determinism, the eternal conflict of capital and labor. Today in secular America we move as a nation further and further away from Biblical truth we are adopting a default position of determinism when it comes to our own lives. Why are you the way you are? Psychology Today will tell you, genetic determinism. You are an alcoholic because of your alcoholic gene. You cheat on your marriage because you have the adultery gene. You are generous because you have a gene for altruism.

In the 1990's, the rage was dysfunctional family determinism. You are the way you are because of your mother, because of your father, it's the neighborhood that you grew up in, it's your birth order- you can't help it! You're a middle child. You're an oldest daughter. You're the baby of the family.

Christianity screams a defiant "no" to every determinism, every one! The thoughtful Christian will say, "Certainly these things will all be influences, my neighborhood, my genetics, my family." They may all be influences, but what we discover in the Bible is this irreducible element of human freedom- the capacity to choose our response.

What we discover in the Bible is the freedom of the human spirit to determine our destiny. You can shape your future, the Apostle Paul says, by what you sow today. Don't just look back at what you sowed five years ago, ten years ago, twenty, thirty years ago. What are you sowing today? There's story after story that gives lie to all the determinisms of life. Think about all of the people who have overcome tremendous obstacles, disabilities, poverty, became incredible successes. If determinism actually was true, how do you account for folks who are successes when everything in their life should point to failure?

Are you familiar with the name Ben Carson? Carson grew up on the streets of Detroit. He seemed destined for jail. He often got into violent fights. He was a very angry child. Clearly a part of his anger was rooted in the fact that his father left his mother when Ben was eight. His mother only had a 3rd grade education. She worked as a maid in order to put food on the table for Ben and his sister. In 5th grade Ben was two years behind the rest of his class. He was considered to be "the class dummy". The other kids made fun of him. When he home a report card with all failing grades his mother drew the line with Ben and his sister. She limited the children's TV watching and she required them to read 2 books a week and to write a book report on each book. Because of mom's limited education, she actually couldn't read or understand some of the reports. Suddenly Ben Carson discovered that he actually was not stupid. He began passing by his white classmates, causing great resentment and a racist reaction. In high school, one of Carson's' teachers berated the class for letting "a negro" outshine them. Carson still had a violent temper even though he was excelling in school. He almost killed a person with whom he fought when he was 14 years old. He was so horrified about his violence that he locked himself in a bathroom with his Bible and begged God to forgive him and to change him. In that bathroom, Ben Carson came upon Proverbs 16:32 which says:

Proverbs 16:32

Better a patient man than a warrior, a man who controls his temper than one who takes a city.

Ben Carson realized that with God's help he really could change and become a man who was patient and self-controlled. Something broke in that bathroom. He emerged as a changed young man. Ben Carson became the class valedictorian. He went to Yale and then on to the University of Michigan Medical School. Carson became a brain surgeon and was the first person to successfully separate Siamese Twins who were joined at the head.

There are many people who have been raised in bad homes and tough environments. Yet the kids became leaders and made a contribution. How do you account for this? I'll tell you my own story:

I wasn't beaten as a child, never went hungry. My home was always in financial chaos. Our house was foreclosed on; we were literally kicked out of our home.

Our cars were regularly repossessed at night- so financial chaos. Creditors were calling all of the time. Our heat was turned off one winter. My parents were divorced when I was 14 years old. I moved from our foreclosed house with my mother to an apartment in New York City, in a totally different neighborhood. Mom was never around when I was in high school.

One of the educational leaders in Columbus, Kwesi Kambon, attends this church. Kwesi did a training seminar for Vineyard staff and he was using a tool that they use in the public schools and many non-profits in assisting children to achieve future success. It's called Developmental Assets. He said, "Remember back to when you were 17 years old, and answer these 40 questions based on what your life was like when you were 17" " Did you have parental supervision? Did you play a musical instrument? Were you involved in a high school sport? Were you involved in volunteer work? Were you a church goer? Did you have a good relationship with your parents? Did you have other adults in your life watching out for you?"

He went down the test and he said, "How'd you guys do? How many of you scored over 30 because scoring over 30 of the 40 is a predictor of future success." Most of our pastors raised their hands, over 30. Some of them were like 37, 38...He said, "How many of you scored between 20 and 30. This means you could have some problems later on." A few pastors raised their hands. He said, "Any of you under 20?" I raised my hand- "eleven." He said, "Eleven?" "You should be in jail!"

Brothers and sisters- there's nothing more hopeful than this principle of sowing and reaping. There are no determinisms in the Christian life. God allows you to choose, with his help and grace, the trajectory of your life. He allows you to choose what you're going to reap in the future. Now there's a warning.

The warning of sowing and reaping

Galatians 6:7

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. People reap what they sow.

God is not mocked. We believe we can get away with poor sowing or no sowing at all and still reap a good harvest. Scripture says God cannot be mocked. The word mocked literally means "to turn your nose up". You cannot turn your nose up at God. You can't sneer at God, in other words. You cannot show contempt for God and his ordering of the universe.

Here's what the Apostle Paul is saying as a warning. We can fool other people by lying to them, by crafting a certain image, we can fool other people. We may fool ourselves, that's why Paul says, "Do not be deceived." We can fool others, we may deceive ourselves, but we can never fool God. God will work this law of sowing and reaping into your life. We can fool people with good public relations

and spin control. There are thousands of people who are “Image Consultants.” Tiger Woods carefully crafted an image of great self control, great self discipline. He crafted an image of a man who was devoted to his wife and baby. He fooled a lot of people. *USA Today* said, a couple of years ago, that Tiger Woods has the most carefully managed image on earth. Then it all blew up and the image consultants went to work.

The dominating question a few months ago was not the oil spill the dominating question in the news, was how is Tiger going to repair his image? What words should he say when he makes his confession? Did he seem sincere? How did you feel about the creepy Nike ad, which had his dead father giving advice to him while Tiger stared plaintively into the camera? Toyota, Martha Stewart, Kobe, GM, and BP all hiring image repair consultants.

John Wooden understood there was a difference between image and character. Coach Wooden said: “Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are.”

God may or may not repair your image. He’s not particularly interested in repairing perceptions but God is infinitely interested in what you and I really are like as we stand before him. Not what other people think about you, not what you even think about yourself when you look in the mirror. The most important question is, what does God think about you? What does He see? God who sees what is done in secret will reward discipline. There is a negative side to sowing and reaping.

The negative side of sowing and reaping

There’s an old saying, “Sow a thought, reap an act. Sow an act, reap a habit. Sow a habit, reap a character. Sow a character reap a destiny.”

The Apostle Paul says in Galatians 6:8:

Galatians 6:8

Those who sow to please their sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; those who sow to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

Paul is saying, if you sow seeds of Galatians chapter 5, verses 19-21 into your life, you will reap destruction:

Galatians 5: 19-21

19 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness,

orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Now, the judgment of hell is the ultimate expression of this. If you keep sowing into a life independent of God, the ultimate destiny of that kind of sowing is hell, destruction. Jesus, who talked about hell more than anybody in the Bible by huge amounts said in Mark 9: 47-48:

Mark 9: 47-48

47 And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, 48 where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.

The word Jesus used for hell is “Gehenna”, not Gahanna, which I’ve been corrected on that. “Gehenna” which is a valley in which piles of garbage were daily burned outside of Jerusalem and the place where corpses of those without families were also burned. It says, “Their worm doesn’t die.” He’s talking about the maggots that live in the corpses on the garbage heap. He’s talking about ongoing decomposition. You sow a life independent of God, what you reap is increasing decomposition, disintegration of your person. You start breaking up.

Now hell is one of the ultimate results of this principle of sowing and reaping. J.I. Packer, the great Christian theologian once said, “Hell is God’s great compliment to human choice. All receive what they actually chose, either to be with God forever, worshipping him, or without God forever, worshipping themselves. ”

In other words, we get in the afterlife, what we want most in this life. The destiny we really want to have, we get. Either we really want God as our savior and our master or we want to be our own saviors, we want to be our own masters. Either, we really want God to call the shots in our life or we really don’t want God. And even in this world you see the early signs of living a God-centered life in terms of peace and patience and kindness and love. And you also see the beginning consequences of living a self-centered life; a person becomes more self-absorbed and self-pitying and their thoughts become more and more distorted. Why mention destruction in this text? Why talk about hell?

Friend you can never really understand how much Jesus loves you unless you read what he said about hell. People say, you know, my God is a God of love; he would never send anyone to hell. God doesn’t send anyone to hell, we choose hell. CS Lewis said, “The door of hell is locked on the inside.”

Folks could have life with God if they chose. We could have life with God if we choose but the door is locked on the inside. But some of us don’t want life with God.

Jesus Christ took hell on himself. He loves you so much and he loves me so much that he was willing to be separated from God when he hung on a cross. He was willing to lose relationship with God. He was willing to experience hell to so that we who trust in him would never have to.

There's a positive side to sowing and reaping.

The positive side of sowing and reaping

Galatians 6:8

Those who sow to please their sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; those who sow to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

We'll receive what is due us. Those who sacrifice to serve the Lord will be rewarded. Folks from this church, who left to go to Tanzania for 3 years, gave up houses, gave up careers, and gave up financial success. God sees every act of service and sacrifice done in his name. He will reward you. God will be in nobody's debt. What we sow, we will reap.

If you sow Galatians 5:22-23 in your life- have love, joy, peace, patience, you will reap a harvest of holiness. If you don't like where you're headed. If you don't like the person you've become. If see in your life that you've become a really angry person, critical person, a harsh person, judgmental person, a self-pitying person, a self-consumed person and you don't like that; it's never too late to change!. You sow to the Spirit, today! This moment you can say: "I'm going to go into recovery." "I'm going to seek out help for my addiction." "I want to sow to the Spirit."

Today if you don't like your marriage, you can begin sowing good into your marriage. You don't like it, change it. Hope for your marriage. Talk with your spouse about going in for counseling. Get in touch with one of the counselors here in the church. Get in touch with Marriage and Family ministry. Start investing in your marriage by scheduling a date night every week. Invest in your marriage by coming home for dinner.

Today you can say: "I'm going to get help for my anger or my depression." You have a financial mess because of bad sowing, you overspent, you undermanaged your finances; we have financial counselors here at the church who can help you and assist you. But you need to choose to get on a different path and sow to the Spirit, to what the Holy Spirit desires in your life. Finally, here is the challenge of sowing and reaping.

The challenge of sowing and reaping

Galatians 6:9

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

The Apostle Paul says at the proper time we will reap. The challenge of this teaching on sowing and reaping is the challenge of delay. There is no immediate payoff; we don't reap the moment after we sow. That is the challenge. The challenge of the principle of sowing and reaping is the challenge of faith to keep believing that this principle is true. That what God is saying here in his word is true. You say: "I'm doing so and so, I'm not reaping." "I went to counseling with my husband but there's still no turning around in our marriage." The scripture here tells us to be patient. We don't sow and reap in the same day. It doesn't work in agriculture, and it doesn't work in our lives. There is no immediate payoff.

Dad, when you put down the newspaper; when you turn off the TV, and get down and play with your children on the floor, you don't reap in that moment. But what you are doing is sowing and investing. Is it really true? You say: "I've prayed for something that God says he wants." God says in his word that he wants all people to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth. God says in his word that he doesn't want anyone to perish but everyone brought to repentance.

You say: "I've been praying for my child for 10 years!" "I've been praying for 20 years that my mother or father would be brought to repentance." "There are still no results!" "Does the principle of sowing and reaping really work?" The answer is "yes." If God has made a promise in his word, he will do it. Wait. When you pray, you are sowing in the spiritual world. You are sowing seed and you will reap. And let me apply this principle of sowing and reaping in closing.

Researchers have studied success. What does it take, for example to make a great basketball player, a person like Michael Jordan or Larry Bird or Kobe Bryant? Are people like Michael Jordan just born great? What produces a concert pianist? Or a great orator? Or a chess champion? Obviously, there is a certain amount of innate ability; I can't dunk a basketball at my height, and with my incredibly limited jumping ability. But you know there are lots of really tall, really athletic people who can jump like crazy and they're still not Michael Jordan. What made him so great? There are literally scores of studies about greatness and when you sift through all the data, guess what the one consistent factor is? The one consistent factor that they discovered behind every great person in study after study is hard work.

For example, they studied 20 year old violinists at a famous music school here in the United States. Experts divided these 20 year olds up into 3 groups; the strongest violin players, the next best and the worst. Guess what they discovered? The best had averaged over 10,000 hours of deliberate practice time over the course of their lives, over 10,000 hours. The next best, 7,500

hours. The worst, 5,000 hours. If Michael Jordan was great simply because he was so naturally talented why was he cut from his high school team? Michael Jordan had insane work habits. Kobe Bryant calls his workout method “666”. Kind of spooky. He works out hard, 6 months a year, 6 days a week, 6 hours a day in getting ready for the basketball season.

Larry Bird would show up three hours before practice and shoot hundreds and hundreds of shots from every place on the court; every angle, stepping back, and moving forward. Jerry Rice, the famous football receiver was considered too slow to be a great receiver. His workouts were so intense that people who tried to stay with him would literally throw up on the field.

Vladimir Horowitz, the great concert pianist once said, “If I miss a day of practice, I notice it. If I miss two days of practice my wife notices it. If I miss three days of practice the world notices.”

Winston Churchill practiced his speeches over and over and over again. That’s what made him such a great orator. John Wooden quoted a poem from Grantland Rice that epitomized, he said, his “philosophy of greatness.” Grantland Rice, was an old sports writer, here’s what he wrote: “

You wonder how they do it, you look to see the knack,
You watch the foot in action, or the shoulder or the back,
But when you spot the answer, where the glammers lurk,
You’ll find in moving higher up the laurel covered spire,
That most of it is practice, and the rest of it is work.

What you sow, you will reap. Today you can choose to sow well. You can choose to sow seeds of faith in your life by deliberately and intentionally welcoming Christ into the center of your being and allow him to direct your life. Let’s pray.

Sowing and Reaping

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Galatians 6: 6-10

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