

# Truth and Spirit Ministries

## Sowing Seed Money

*I've been sowing seed a lot. When did sowing seed (money) become the dominate teacher, rather than the word being the dominant teaching?*

Although it is a fact that the Lord promises us that we will be blessed when we give, the main focus of God's people should not be on the constant pursuit of money but instead on God, his Kingdom and righteousness. The Lord has already promised us that when we **“seek the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, all of these things will be given to us well.”** (*Luke 6:38, Matthew 6:33*) We should all place our trust in God and not money.

It is sad to say but in certain ministries today it has become blatantly noticeable that their message revolves around money rather than the Lord Jesus Christ and his gospel. Instead of trusting God by faith for their financial needs, some ministers have resorted to worldly tactics or works of the flesh to acquire or maintain finances for their ministries that now may require massive amounts of money to operate. For others however they may have simply become *lovers of money* or greedy for personal wealth and see the Church as a means to that end. The Apostle Paul prophesied that in the last days there would be people that would be like this.

**“But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, *lovers of money*, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.”** (*II Timothy 3:1-5*)

In the passage of scripture quoted above, Paul told believers to **“mark this”**. In others words, we are to especially remember or pay attention to this particular divine prophetic warning. We are also given additional instructions as to how we are to relate to such people. Paul uses strong language regarding this by saying, **“Have nothing to do with them.”** A tell tale sign that helps us to identify those who consistently display these tendencies will be that they **“have a form of godliness but will deny its power.”** What does this mean? It means that not everyone that we see serving will be genuine and have his power. We should be on guard against people that may have the outward appearance of godliness but lack the substance (or power) of Christ in their ministry to others. After all, the Kingdom of God is not just a matter of talk (words only) but the real proof that God is working through those that serve him is in the manifestation of his power. (*I Corinthians 2:1-5, II Corinthians 4:2, Mark 16:17-20*)

When it comes to the act of giving and receiving teaching about giving, we all need to trust the Holy Spirit for godly discernment. (*I John 4:1-1, I Corinthians 12:10*) If and when a minister's dominant teaching has become all about money this should send up a red flag to believers that come into contact with them to have nothing to do with them. It's important that we validate the preaching and teaching of others and make sure that it lines up with the Gospel of Christ and the ordinances of the New Covenant.

We should always take a balanced approach when teaching or receiving the Word of God. Regarding the doctrine of sowing and reaping, the Bible uses many analogies concerning sowing seed, but the truth is, not all seed has to do with money. Although the Apostle Paul did use the analogy of sowing seed in the form of freewill offerings in the Church, the Lord used this same analogy of the seed as being the *Word of God*, as you mentioned in your question. (*II Corinthians 9: 6-11, Luke 8:11*)

There are other things that we can sow besides money as well according to the Bible. Although this is not a complete list, here are a few examples.

- **We can sow our labor and reap rewards from the Lord. (*Hebrews 6: 10*)**
- **We can sow material things (other than money). (*Luke 10:5-8, I Corinthians 9:1-11*)**
- **We can sow spiritual things. (*I Corinthians 9:11*)**
- **We can sow to the Spirit. (*Galatians 6:8*)**
- **Our financial sowing helps to prove our obedience to and spread the Gospel. Our sowing also supplies what is needed for the poor, God's people and his ministers that labor in the Gospel. (*II Corinthians 9:6-13, Philipians 4:14-20*)**  
(This could consist of food, clothing, shelter or other material goods as well.)
- **We can sow good seed into the Kingdom of God. (*Matthew 13:24*)**
- **We can reap where we did not sow also. (*John 4:35-38*)**
- **We can sow the Word. (*Luke 8:5, 11*)**

The act of sowing can also be bad as well as good.

- **One can sow to please their flesh (sinful nature) and reap destruction. (*Galatians 6:8*)**
- **The enemy (Satan) sows tares among the wheat. (*Matthew 13:25*)**
- **Some can sow discord among the brethren. (*Proverbs 6:16-19*)**
- **Some sow works of darkness, which become unfruitful. (*Ephesians 5:6-11*)**

As we can see, these analogies given to us in the Bible pertaining to sowing and reaping are meant to teach us greater lessons than about money alone. We are taught in the Word that we will reap the fruit of what we sow, whether good or bad. Ironically, ministers that use manipulation, control, legalism and deception to try to force the hand of believers to sow seed money are in effect sowing seeds of decay, ruin or destruction themselves by using fleshly or worldly tactics. (*Galatians 6:7-8*) Works of the flesh are in direct opposition or conflict with the fruit of the Spirit *and will actually prevent us* from inheriting the things of the Kingdom of God. (*Galatians 5:16-21*)

False or unbalanced teaching misrepresents the truth of God's Word and can lead others astray or cause them to eventually go off into error. (*Titus 1:10-16, II Peter 2:1-20*) Leadership within the Church usually has a great influence on others. Ministers should try to set a godly example among the people of God. (*II Peter 5:1-4*) In this passage of scripture, Peter also mentions that leaders are to set an example when it comes to money. (*Verse 2*) The apostle Paul understood this fact and always strived to set a godly example to those within the Church. He made it clear to the saints at Corinth that he did not use the word of God deceitfully while teaching them. He said:

**“Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.” (*II Corinthians 4:2*) “For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you.” (*I Thessalonians 2:3*)**

Ministers of Christ today should follow Paul's fine example and make sure they are not teaching error and check their motives for ministry. It's important that ministers validate their preaching/teaching with the Gospel of Christ and the doctrines of the New Testament. *It's also important that our teaching does not violate the consciences of others in the sight of God.* Since the Word of God is likened unto good seed, Paul was careful as to what kind of seed he planted among God's people. (*I Corinthians 2:5-9*) Paul did not use manipulation, control or legalism when it came to teaching brethren to give either. Instead he exhorted or encouraged right giving. This is attested to by his writings.

**“But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this *grace of giving*. I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others.” (*II Corinthians 8:7-8*)**

Paul also set a godly example in the way that he handled the monetary offerings of the saints of God.

**“We want to avoid any criticism of the way we administer this liberal gift. For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men.” (*II Corinthians 8:20-21*)**

We will all be held accountable before the Lord for the things that we have done in the body, whether good or bad. (*II Corinthians 5:10*) The Book of James declares that those who teach the people of God will be judged more strictly than others. (*James 3:1*) Teachers of the Word then, have greater accountability before the Lord because of their influence and responsibility towards the body of Christ.

### **Greater Meaning behind the Seed**

The seed is used as an analogy for many things in the Word, yet some only apply it to money in their teachings. There are some in the Body of Christ that teach and promote a doctrine called “seedtime and harvest”. The name of this doctrine was taken from a passage of scripture in *Genesis 8:22*. Staunch supporters of this doctrine most often apply

it to monetary sowing but this is not really the context of this passage. When we back up and read the context of the entire passage we will find that the Lord here is mainly speaking of the seedtime and harvest that has to do with the reproduction of *people, animals and plant life* that he has created to be upon the earth. After the Flood, he promised that he would never destroy life on earth again and that the cycle of life that he has created and perpetuates through seedtime and harvest would never stop. The rainbow is God's sign and covenant with man that he will always keep that promise. (*Genesis 9:1-17*)

Often this scripture has been taken out of context by some in order to get people to give or "sow" more money into their ministries. It is not wrong to teach others to sow generously by giving offerings, but this teaching should not dominate or have greater preeminence over a much more important Seed, Jesus; the living Word of God. (*Genesis 3:15, Galatians 3:16, John 1:1*) Our message must be centered on Christ, not on money. The message of the Gospel of Christ and what he has accomplished for all men through the Cross should not be cast aside and replaced with a gospel of money. Sadly, that has been the case with some modern day ministries. Some have been working on storing up treasures on earth instead of in heaven.

The Lord knows the hearts of men, this is why he admonished us all in the Sermon on the Mount, **"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."** (*Matthew 6:21*) Whatever we treasure or love the most in our hearts will eventually be revealed to others. Jesus also said, **"Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks."** Whatever we value the most in our hearts will eventually be spoken of out of our mouths. According to this, those that are lovers of money will eventually tell on themselves.

Only the Lord knows the hearts of all men and he alone is the final judge. Although we are not to judge people and the motives of their hearts, we are to judge the message that they preach, teach or prophesy and whether or not the fruit of the Spirit (and the power of God) is being manifested in their lives and ministries. According to the Lord Jesus, we will be able to recognize the difference between true and false ministry *by their fruit*. Fruit is the outgrowth, result or consequence of seeds that have been sown. That fruit can be good or bad. (*Matthew 7:15-20*) We are all sowing something and what we sow will determine the fruit we bear. We can sow to please the Spirit, reap his fruit and eternal life or we can sow to the flesh, profit nothing and reap destruction. (*Galatians 5:22-23, 6:7-8, John 6:63*) We are not obligated to follow or obey the teachings of others that do not come under the Lordship of Christ and the Gospel.

Of course, if we are truly Christ like, we will be *givers*. Ministries do need money to operate and share the gospel of Christ with both the saved and the lost. Again, as believers, we prove our love and obedience to the Lord by giving to others and supporting those ministers who carry the gospel to others. Each of us should ask God what our part is in supporting this greatest work in the earth today and obey what he tells us to do. When we allow the Holy Spirit to divinely orchestrate our giving, God will work everything out for the good. – *Answered by Denise Bostic*