

So, The Thing Is... We Reap What We Sow

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By Barbara Cooper

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So, the thing is... we reap what we sow.

A few weeks ago, my daughters and I planted some seeds. It was a fun project to do together because it involved digging in the dirt and talking about how plants grow, plus the sun was warm on our faces. It was a perfect day. I wouldn't have been very surprised if the seeds hadn't sprouted at all, since projects like this one make Jane very enthusiastic, and you'd think seeds are more fragile than her handling would indicate. Not to mention that I'd had those packets of seeds in my desk drawer for almost two years— that's probably not good for seeds either. But when we were finished, we had forty-eight little containers of potting soil and hope, and a very nice memory of a warm day.

Of course, I spent the next three weeks muttering under my breath as I carried all those darn containers in and out of the house since we aren't past the freezing weather. But then, about a week ago, we noticed that our little seeds had sprouted the tiniest and most fragile plants. It seemed miraculous to the kids, and frankly, to me, too. It's oddly comforting to think that if we plant seeds in good soil and we protect them from the cold and we make sure they have lots of sunlight, most of them will sprout. In the midst of all the uncertainty in the world, it's a nice reminder of growth and renewal.

So then, still taking advantage of some lovely weather, the girls and I went to feed the ducks at the large public park near our house. Afterward, we decided to walk across these big soccer fields to see an arrangement of large stones that sometimes serves as an amphitheater.

Well, Ana took off running. I let her go for a bit because I know how good it feels to run full-out across a big space. Jane couldn't keep up, though, and in no time Ana was too far ahead of us and would not listen to my calls. Soon she was climbing up those big rocks. There was a man with a big dog running loose and the dog pinned Ana in a crevice - he didn't bite her but it could have been terrible and I wouldn't have gotten to her in time. I've never felt so helpless. The man passed me and asked with this `what kind of a mother ARE you' tone, "Is that your little girl up on those rocks?" (I was too frantic

So, The Thing Is... We Reap What We Sow

to bring up the leash law right then.)

Anyway, I couldn't get Ana to come down from the rocks and then Jane started to climb and when I picked her up to bring her down, she kicked me so hard that I shook her —not repeatedly, but one shake. And then I started to cry because I couldn't believe that I was so far gone that I touched my child in anger. I am still deeply ashamed of myself. Because, of course, I wasn't really even angry with JANE.

It was a horrible end to what could have been a wonderful day. I kept thinking of all the terrible things that might have happened to Ana. She could have fallen off those rocks. That man could have been some child molester. That dog could have attacked her.

When I calmed down and got the kids back into the car and everyone stopped crying, I started to wonder if my reaction was too extreme. Am I am too paranoid about my children's safety? IS the

world a more dangerous place than when I was growing up? Because I can remember taking off on my bike (blue with banana seat and a big flag) and just staying gone all day. I wasn't that much older than Ana is now. I came home for meals and band-aids, but I played all over our neighborhood, as did all the other kids, and no one ever gave it a second thought. I would have run over to those rocks to explore them, too.

The media seems inordinately focused on the bad things that happen to kids and the weirdoes out there who victimize them. I think we parents respond by trying to avoid every risk— every situation—that might be the least dangerous. I rarely let my children out of my sight unless they are safely within the confines of our house or at school. I feel like I say, "Be careful!" about six hundred times a day. I've heard myself preemptively tell my children, "Don't run with scissors" when they had no intention of doing so anyway.

I have to wonder what this is doing to my kids. We talk to them so young now about "stranger danger" and "Good Touch, Bad Touch." Then we explain things like war and terrorism and racism. We pad them in car seats and bike helmets against accidents and they hold our hands across streets and in parking lots. We've taught them that they are safe holding our hands but what about when we're not there? Will our children grow up afraid of their shadows?

I believe that children build confidence by meeting challenges and overcoming them, and sometimes that means that they fall off of the monkey bars. But what is the net effect if we never let them climb because of the fear of falling? Are we creating a world full of fear for them? I came across an article by Ernest E. Allen, president and CEO of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children called "Keeping Children Safe: Rhetoric vs. Reality." (<http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/jjjournal/jjjournal598/safe.html>) It is a horrifyingly factual article about child abductions and molestations. Just as I was making up my mind to build some large terrarium to keep my children in for the rest of their lives, I read this: "America's families need not live in fear, but parents need to be fully informed about the dangers their children face and the most effective ways to educate them and guard them from harm. The key to child safety is communication."

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The thing is... I don't want my children to feel like victims but even more than that, I don't want them to ever BE victims. It's just so hard to prepare them for how to deal with bad people without creating a fear of EVERYONE. I don't know how much caution is enough and how much is too much but I am talking to my kids about potential dangers AND potential good. I'm working on not creating an atmosphere of fear. Because, you know, the world is actually more good than bad. People are mostly good.

Sometimes, maybe we have to trust that even though we can't protect them every single second, our kids are going to be okay. Maybe our children are hardier than we think, just like those little seeds. If we give them a positive and warm environment and we watch for the big dangers (like freezing weather and pedophiles), we just have to go on faith that they'll flourish. Even if it means letting them take some risks.

Because if we keep them in the desk drawer, they'll never get a chance to blossom.

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Barbara Cooper is the mother of Ana (almost five) and Hurricane Jane (28 months) and this weekly column, called "So, the thing is...". She lives in Austin, Texas and she's going to have a LOT of basil this year.

Universal Law Of Prosperity

By "Dr. Jay Snell"

Sowing and reaping are universal laws of nature because God set them up to be universal laws of nature. These laws work in all things. What ever is sown is ultimately what is reaped. Scriptures declare it! Here is just one.

Gal 6:7-9 7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap...for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not (KJV)

This Scripture principle applies to the sowing of finances as well to sowing seed on a farm. If you sow corn you will reap corn. If you sow cotton you will reap cotton. If you sow tomatoes you will reap tomatoes.

So, The Thing Is... We Reap What We Sow

Likewise if you sow finances into God's vineyard, you will reap yourself a money harvest. This is a universal law. What you reap now is what you sowed yesterday.

God showed me some years ago, why sowing and reaping works with the planting of money into God's vineyard. He showed me that He quickens or makes alive the inanimate, dead money that we sow.

Even a seed of corn, cotton or tomatoes dies in the ground before it can reproduce itself. Consequently, the thought of money being made alive by God should not be shocking at all. After all, He makes the corn, cotton and tomato seed come alive even though it is dead.

In other words, seed money planted into His vineyard takes on a supernatural life that is capable of reproduction just like a grain of corn that the farmer sows. Get this well! Your money seed lives and reproduces itself just like a grain of corn. This requires a supernatural act of God.

Think of it. When you plant a money seed, God actually makes that money live with the life of God in it. Consequently, it can supernaturally reproduce itself a hundredfold and come back to you in the form of a money harvest.

Begin now to sow everywhere you can and as much as you can. This way you will have a continual harvest of money. The more often you sow, the more often you can reap.

This is the miracle working power of God in your money life. When you sow money into His vineyard, you make Him responsible for your financial condition. When you do not sow into His work, you and you alone, are totally responsible for your financial situation.

Sow some seed today and let Him be responsible for your finances. You will be glad you did.

Dr. Jay Snell: Author of books concerning the healing, prosperity, family well being and salvation contained in the Abrahamic covenant for Christians. Books presented many times on TBN.

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