

Preparing for a bountiful harvest

Every gardener knows the moment, the gap between the seed going into the ground and anything worth calling a harvest coming out of it. In that gap lives faith. In that gap, God does most of His best work. And in that gap, most of us are tempted to give up, dig the seed back up to check on it, or plant something easier instead. Preparing for a bountiful harvest is not really about the harvest at all. It is about what we do in the waiting, the weeding and the watering long before there is anything to show for it.

Genesis tells us that as long as the earth remains, seedtime and harvest will not cease. That is a promise, not a suggestion. God has built the rhythm of sowing and reaping into creation itself, and He has built the same rhythm into the spiritual life. You do not get to skip the season of sowing and land straight in the season of celebration. Every harvest anyone has ever gathered began as a handful of seed that someone was willing to release, in faith, into ground they could not see beneath.

Paul puts it plainly to the Galatians. Do not grow weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Notice what he does not say. He does not say the harvest comes quickly. He does not say it comes easily. He says it comes at the proper time, to those who keep going. A bountiful harvest belongs to the person who sows generously, tends faithfully, and refuses to quit in the months when nothing visible is happening at all.

So how do we actually prepare for it? It begins with the soil of our own hearts. Hosea calls us to break up the unploughed ground, because it is time to seek the Lord. Hard ground rejects seed. Bitterness, distraction, unforgiveness and busyness all harden the heart until the word of God simply bounces off the surface rather than taking root. Preparation begins long before we ask God for a harvest of blessing, breakthrough or fruitfulness. It begins with an honest look at whether our own soil has been broken up and made ready to receive.

Alongside that, we sow generously rather than cautiously. Paul tells the Corinthians that whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. This is not a formula for getting rich. It is a principle woven through the whole of Scripture, that God responds to generosity of spirit, time, resources and love with a generosity of His own. If you want a small harvest, sow small. If you want abundance, sow abundantly, cheerfully, and without resentment, trusting the Lord who supplies seed to the sower.

We also water and weed while we wait. James reminds us that the farmer waits patiently for the land to yield its valuable crop, watching for the autumn and spring rains. Patience here is not passive. The farmer is not idle between planting and harvest. He is out there every day, tending what has been sown, pulling up what threatens to

choke it, watching the sky. Prayer, worship, obedience and community are how we tend the seed of God's promises in our lives while we wait for them to break the surface.

And we keep our eyes open for readiness. Jesus stood with His disciples and told them to look at the fields, for they were already white for harvest. Sometimes we assume a harvest is far off when it is, in fact, standing ready and simply waiting for someone to notice and gather it in. Part of preparing for a bountiful harvest is training ourselves to see what God is already doing around us, in our families, our workplaces and our churches, rather than only looking for a harvest we imagine must arrive somewhere else, some other day.

Above all, we remember that those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. Every harvest carries the memory of the cost it took to plant it. The nights of doubt. The seasons that looked like failure. The seed sown in grief that we could not yet see would ever grow into anything at all. That is precisely the seed the Psalmist promises will return home carrying sheaves, with shouts of joy. Nothing you have sown in faith, even through tears, is wasted ground.

A bountiful harvest is never an accident, and it is never instant. It is the fruit of ground broken up, seed sown generously, patience exercised faithfully, and eyes kept open for what God is already ripening around us. Wherever you are in the process today, whether you are still breaking up hard soil or watching for the first green shoot, take heart. The God who established seedtime and harvest has not forgotten the seed you have sown. Keep sowing. Keep tending. Keep believing. Your harvest is coming, and when it comes, it will be worth every season it took to grow.

Questions

1. Where in your life do you need to trust that seedtime and harvest have not ceased? (**Genesis 8:22**)
2. What would it look like for you to keep going without growing weary today? (**Galatians 6:9**)
3. Is there unploughed ground in your heart that needs breaking up? (**Hosea 10:12**)
4. Are you sowing generously or sowing sparingly right now? (**2 Corinthians 9:6**)
5. Can you see a harvest that is already ripe and waiting to be gathered? (**John 4:35**)