

HOW TO REAP A HARVEST PT1

Before we can begin to understand how God intended for us to receive from him we have to deal with a major deception. Satan has convinced the modern church that you can receive from God apart from faith.

Most of us have been taught that **we receive from God based on His sovereign will and timing, that his will happens automatically**, that God decides if, when, where and how a person receives from him and we have no role to play other than to wait to see what he decides.

We are told to pray and wait for God to sovereignly move, so we pray and if nothing happens it wasn't God's will, if it does happen it was God's will. We are told if something good happens it is God's will and if something bad happens it is also God's will, that he must have some divine purpose for our affliction.

We have to be honest about this. Right now there are millions of sincere Christians who are suffering and many others who have already passed on while waiting for a sovereign move of God.

All of this comes from a wrong view of predestination.

Romans 8:29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

This simply means that God has a predetermined plan for all of his children. **The deception comes when we believe that His plans happen automatically.**

Let's look at a couple of verses that speak of God's predetermined plan for his children.

Jeremiah 29:11-12 NIV For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. 12 Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.

If God's will happened automatically, the world would not be filled with hopeless people suffering from depression and oppression, drug addiction and suicide.

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

If God's will happened automatically then no one would be perishing and Jesus would not have talked about a wide and narrow road.

2 Timothy 1:9 He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time.

The Greek word for saved here is *sozo*. It means to be [saved from perishing, healed from diseases, delivered from the power of sin, to be made whole or complete].

If God's will happened automatically the world and the church would not be filled with sickness and disease.

In Genesis God made a covenant with man that they would have the ability to choose for themselves, we call this the doctrine of freewill. They got to choose between eating the tree of life which represents a life of intimacy with him or the tree of the knowledge of good and evil which represented independence from God.

If God was going to break his covenant with man he would have done it right there in the Garden of Eden, he would have just hit control, alt, delete and started all over with abundant plan for man.

God is love and love demands a choice. God didn't want slaves that would follow him by force, he wanted a family who would follow him by choice.

One of the most powerful forces in the universe is the freewill of man because by choice God will not over ride it even to fulfill his redemptive purposes.

Food for thought.

- 1) If sovereignty means nothing can happen that God doesn't cause or allow, God's nature produces both good and evil, then we can't trust the source of life.
- 2) If sovereignty means God chooses what we receive, our freewill is violated.
- 3) If sovereignty means that God chooses how or when we receive our faith is irrelevant.

If God's will doesn't happen automatically, how did God intend for us to receive from Him?

BY FAITH

Faith is like a two sided coin.

Belief is taking God at his word, even when there is no physical evidence.

Faith the corresponding action to what you believe.

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the assurance (the confirmation, the title deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality [faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses].

Only by faith can you believe what you can't see, taste, hear, smell and feel.

Hebrews 10:38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him."

The just means the justified ones, the righteous ones, the believers.

Shall is a command not a suggestion.

Only by faith can you believe what you can't see, taste, hear, smell and feel.

Faith in the Old Testament

Hebrews 11:4-12 By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.⁵ By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, “and was not found, because God had taken him”; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. ⁶ But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. ⁷ By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; ¹⁰ for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. ¹¹ By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she^[d] bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. ¹² Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

Faith in the New Testament

The woman with the issue of blood.

Matthew 9:22 Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, “Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well.” And the woman was made well from that hour.

Blind Men Healed

²⁷ When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, “Son of David, have mercy on us!” ²⁸ And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, “Do you believe that I am able to do this?” They said to Him, “Yes, Lord.” ²⁹ Then He touched their eyes, saying, “According to your faith let it be to you.” ³⁰ And their eyes were opened.

We have to understand the balance of grace and faith.

Ephesians 2:8-9 NKJV For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Grace is a word with many meanings, one meaning is the totality of what Jesus provided through salvation.

Titus 2:11 NKJV For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.

Salvation describes everything that Jesus did to destroy the work of the devil and restore God’s original plan for man.

When did grace happen? Two thousand years ago through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

God's part was to provide salvation, our part is to receive it as a free gift. So how do we receive it? By faith.

Romans 10:10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Does this say that if you believe when God's sovereign timing is right he will save you?

In order to be saved you had to act on what you said you believed. Your corresponding action was your confession of faith.

The simplicity of faith.

Matthew 4:23-24 TPT Jesus ministered from place to place throughout all of the province of Galilee. He taught in the synagogues, preaching the wonderful news of the kingdom and healing every kind of sickness and disease among the people. 24 His fame spread throughout all Syria! Many people who were in pain and suffering with every kind of illness were brought to Jesus for their healing—epileptics, paralytics, and those tormented by demonic powers were all set free. Everyone who was brought to Jesus was healed!

The bible is very clear that everyone who came to Jesus got healed.

They heard that Jesus was the healer and they believed what they heard.

They believed that he healed every sickness and disease so whatever they had fell under the category of every.

They realized that everyone was healed and they fell under the category of everyone. So no one was disqualified.

What about their big bold faith?

They simply came expecting to receive a free gift and got healed.

Contrast this with how you got saved.

You believed that Jesus was the Savior and everyone who came to him got saved.

You simply came expecting to receive a free gift and got saved.