



Out and About

Oct. 22 — Stark County Cluster Meeting, Maple Grove Mennonite, Hartville

Oct. 23 - Conference Staff Meeting, Kidron Office

Oct. 26 — Gifts Discernment Ministry Meeting

Oct. 27 — Lima Cluster Meeting, Salem Mennonite, Elida

Oct. 29 — Northwest Ohio Cluster Meeting, West Clinton Mennonite, Wauseon

Nov. 2 — Ministry Development Team Meeting, Upper Sandusky

Nov. 3 — Holmes County Cluster Meeting, Longenecker Mennonite, Winesburg

Nov. 5 — Wayne County Cluster Meeting, Kidron Mennonite

Nov. 13-15 — Pastor-Spouse Retreat, Mohican State Park Lodge

Nov. 17 — Leadership Team Meeting

Nov. 17 — West Central/Southwest Ohio Cluster Meeting, Bethel Mennonite, West Liberty

Nov. 19 — Columbiana/Northwest Pa. Cluster Meeting, Midway Mennonite, Columbiana



Travels and News
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The Axioms of Creation's Spiritual Physics

Over time I have been drawn to a notion of "spiritual physics" to convey how the Scriptures teach that certain principles in the spiritual matters of life are just as "built into" creation as are those "physical laws" of nature we learned in science.

This principle is seen fairly readily in Galatians 6: "Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow. If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit." — Galatians 6:7-8 (NRSV)

Apparently some needed reminding of the spiritual law of sowing and reaping. They seem to have imagined that they could, for example, sow weeds and reap grain!

Paul admonishes them strongly that "God is not mocked!" challenging any thought that one can escape receiving back in the spiritual realm just exactly the kind of thing he planted in his actions and attitudes. "Well, certainly!" we think, and never consider if we do not at times attempt just this.

Paul has named things at odds with the Spirit and the Spirit's fruit as fruit of the flesh — human effort and actions in its fallen and self-indulgent state. In a sort of two-tier list Paul names all sorts of sexual and relational sins from orgies to dissensions, from immorality and idolatry to outbursts of anger and factions (Galatians 5:19-21).

At times, any of these fruits of the flesh could seem an appealing "fruit" to someone. But they each and all are like "bad fruit" which quickly rots when picked, or bad seed which only grows weeds. Sown in self-indulgence of either illicit pleasure or illicit judging, they each fall under the axiom of spiritual physics that you reap what you sow. Sometimes we may think we can sow anger and at some point reap peace, but God's physics of creation will not yield to such manipulation.

On the other hand, if we by the life of the Spirit sow the things of the Spirit such as love, joy peace, etc. (Galatians 5:22 again), God is not mocked. The good seed sown in the Spirit brings forth the increased flow of the life of the Spirit — things that do not rot but bring the "living fruit" of God's life.

This passage may strike us mostly as being about judgment, but it is actually an encouragement. Paul ends by saying we should persevere in doing good, especially to the household of faith. We can anticipate the spiritual physics of God's design of creation will ring true. We will reap a harvest in God's time.

If when we want the things of Spirit to come to us, we sow the things of the Spirit in our living, Paul declares we can be assured this spiritual sowing will bring a spiritual reaping. God will not be mocked and let other things interfere. God's creative word does not return to him void, but accomplishes his purpose.

Perhaps we could even say when we go to pick up our harvest we can tell what we have sown by what we reap. So, perhaps we should remember our physics!

