

Study Guide: The Law of Sowing and Reaping

Overview & Core Premise

This study guide is designed for Christian families and Bible study groups to analyze the spiritual and practical principles outlined in *"The Law of Sowing and Reaping: Overcoming Bad Habits and Addictions — Part 2"* (February 20, 2021).

The source text explores how individual choices create momentum, leading either to spiritual freedom or destructive addiction. By examining foundational Scriptures (Galatians 6:7–8, James 1:13–16, Romans 1:24–32, and Proverbs 5:22–23), personal accounts, and historical illustrations, this guide provides a structured framework for understanding the progressive nature of sin, exposing the lies behind bad habits, and leveraging truth and community to achieve complete freedom.

Part 1: Discussion & Study Questions

Lesson 1: The Law of Sowing and Reaping

1. **Galatians 6:7–8 Analysis:** According to Galatians 6:7–8, what are the two distinct ways a person can "sow," and what is the direct "reap" or consequence of each?
2. **The Momentum of Sin:** Quoting Bill Gothard, the text states, "The wages of sin is more sin." How does giving in to lust or bad desires create a physical or spiritual momentum in a person's life?
3. **The Example of Marcus:** Describe the progression of Marcus's struggle with alcohol. What did he gradually lose, and what drove the author to make a life-long personal vow regarding alcohol based on Marcus's life?

Lesson 2: The Origin and Progressive Nature of Temptation

1. **Clarifying the Source of Temptation (James 1:13–16):** Who does James 1:13–16 explicitly state is *not* responsible for tempting humans with evil? What is the actual step-by-step process that leads from inner desire to eternal death?
2. **"The Hook" and Decreasing Pleasure:** What constitutes "the hook" when a person first gives in to a temptation? Why are people eventually driven deeper into actions that were previously repulsive to them?

3. **The Downward Spiral (Romans 1:24–32):** According to Romans 1:24–32, what key exchange takes place in the human heart (verse 25)? What happens when God "gives people over" to their own heart's lusts and depraved minds? List at least five characteristics or behaviors that saturate lives when God is abandoned.

Lesson 3: Breaking the Cycle – Truth and Accountability

1. **Exposing the Underlying Lie:** The text asserts that every bad habit and addiction is rooted in a lie. How does exchanging "truth for a lie" cause slavery, and how does restoring truth dismantle the power of bad habits?
2. **The Power of Association (Romans 1:32):** Why do individuals trapped in destructive habits often seek out and surround themselves with others practicing the same behaviors? How can this principle be reversed to foster healing and freedom?

Lesson 4: Eternal Consequences and Present Choices

1. **The Vision of Bob Jones and Proverbs 5:22–23:** Describe the experience shared by Bob Jones from August 8, 1975. How does his vision of the man encased in a whiskey bottle illustrate the truths taught in Proverbs 5:22–23?
2. **The Ultimate Decision:** The text poses two contrasting ways a person can die. What are these two options, and why does the author state that this decision is being made "now"?

Part 2: Answer Key

Lesson 1: The Law of Sowing and Reaping

1. **According to Galatians 6:7–8, what are the two distinct ways a person can "sow," and what is the direct "reap" or consequence of each?**
 - **Sowing to please the flesh:** Reaps destruction from the flesh.
 - **Sowing to please the Spirit:** Reaps eternal life from the Spirit.
2. **Quoting Bill Gothard, the text states, "The wages of sin is more sin." How does giving in to lust or bad desires create a physical or spiritual momentum in a person's life?**
 - Giving in to sinful desires creates momentum that propels a person to continue in that negative direction. Unchecked, bad choices build

upon themselves, leading to a path of enslavement and ultimate destruction where a person feels powerless to stop without God's help.

3. Describe the progression of Marcus's struggle with alcohol. What did he gradually lose, and what drove the author to make a life-long personal vow regarding alcohol based on Marcus's life?

- Marcus began with what appeared to be harmless drinking with friends, which turned into an overpowering lust that demanded satisfaction until alcohol controlled him. Consequently, he lost his money, jobs, opportunities, family, and health.
- The author decided to never drink alcohol again partly to ensure they would never influence anyone else to follow a path that destroyed their friend.

Lesson 2: The Origin and Progressive Nature of Temptation

1. Clarifying the Source of Temptation (James 1:13–16): Who does James 1:13–16 explicitly state is *not* responsible for tempting humans with evil? What is the actual step-by-step process that leads from inner desire to eternal death?

- **Source:** God is incapable of being tempted by evil and tempts no one.
- **Step-by-Step Process:**
 1. A person is drawn away, enticed, and baited by their own evil desire (lust/passions).
 2. The evil desire conceives and gives birth to sin.
 3. Sin, when fully matured, brings forth death.

2. What constitutes "the hook" when a person first gives in to a temptation? Why are people eventually driven deeper into actions that were previously repulsive to them?

- "The hook" is the initial high or feeling of pleasure experienced when first giving in to temptation.
- As the person continues to indulge in the same action, it yields less pleasure over time. To seek the original high, the person is driven to

do more and go deeper into shameful or previously repulsive behaviors.

3. According to Romans 1:24–32, what key exchange takes place in the human heart (verse 25)? What happens when God "gives people over" to their own heart's lusts and depraved minds? List at least five characteristics or behaviors that saturate lives when God is abandoned.

- **Key Exchange:** By choice, individuals exchange the truth of God for a lie, choosing to worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator.
- **Result of being "Given Over":** God abandons them to the degrading power of sin, vile passions, unnatural functions, and depraved minds to do improper and repulsive acts.
- **Characteristics (Select any 5):** Unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil, envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice, mean-spiritedness, gossip, slander, hatred of God, insolence, arrogance, boastfulness, inventing new forms of evil, disobedience to parents, lack of understanding, untrustworthiness, unlovingness, unmercifulness.

Lesson 3: Breaking the Cycle – Truth and Accountability

1. The text asserts that every bad habit and addiction is rooted in a lie. How does exchanging "truth for a lie" cause slavery, and how does restoring truth dismantle the power of bad habits?

- Believing a lie leads people to seek satisfaction in sinful cravings, resulting in slavery to bad habits. Once the lie is exposed and replaced with God's truth, the bad habit or addiction loses its spiritual and psychological power, enabling a person to choose a path toward complete freedom.

2. Why do individuals trapped in destructive habits often seek out and surround themselves with others practicing the same behaviors (Romans 1:32)? How can this principle be reversed to foster healing and freedom?

- **Why:** Surrounding oneself with others bound by the same sins helps drown out the voice of conscience and offers mutual support/enthusiastic approval for their destructive choices.

- **Reversal:** By intentionally surrounding oneself with people walking a good path who have found freedom, a person gains encouragement, hope, and necessary accountability to maintain their own freedom.

Lesson 4: Eternal Consequences and Present Choices

1. Describe the experience shared by Bob Jones from August 8, 1975. How does his vision of the man encased in a whiskey bottle illustrate the truths taught in Proverbs 5:22–23?

- **Bob Jones' Vision:** During a death experience on August 8, 1975, Bob Jones saw souls going to hell, literally bound by the "gods" they worshiped on earth. One man was encased in a whiskey bottle because alcohol had been his god.
- **Connection to Proverbs 5:22–23:** It illustrates that sinners are trapped by their own evil acts, held tight by the "ropes of their sins," and die captured by their own refusal to be corrected and their utter foolishness.

2. The text poses two contrasting ways a person can die. What are these two options, and why does the author state that this decision is being made "now"?

- **Two Options:**
 1. Dying bound to a bad habit or addiction that never satisfied and robbed you of your life.
 2. Dying in freedom, having lived a life filled with purpose and meaning.
- **"Now":** The choice is made through the daily, immediate decisions a person makes regarding what they sow (pleasing the flesh vs. pleasing the Spirit).

Part 3: Glossary of Key Terms

Term	Source Context Definition
Accountability Community	A group of individuals following a good, free path in life who support, encourage, and hold a person responsible for their behavior to help them maintain freedom from bad habits.

Depraved Mind	A mind given over by God to improper, repulsive, and unrighteous thinking as a direct consequence of refusing to acknowledge or value God as Creator.
The Hook	The initial high or temporary pleasure felt when first giving in to a temptation, which deceives the individual into repeating the sinful behavior.
Lust / Evil Desire	Internal passions and cravings that entice, bait, and draw a person away from God, serving as the conception point for sin (James 1:14–15).
Progressive Sin	The inherent characteristic of sin, bad habits, and addictions to never remain at a static level, continuously driving an individual deeper into destructive and shameful actions.
Reaping	Receiving the inevitable outcomes, consequences, or penalties (either eternal life or destruction) resulting from the thoughts and actions one has cultivated.
Sowing	The daily choices, actions, and indulgences a person invests in—either to satisfy the earthly flesh or to align with the Spirit of God.
The Wages of Sin	A principle (quoted via Bill Gothard) establishing that the consequence of giving in to sin is not neutral; rather, committing sin produces the momentum and desire to commit <i>more</i> sin.