



"If we ever forget that we are One Nation Under God, then we will be a Nation gone under."

—Ronald Reagan

12-Sep-03

Sowing and Reaping

Two years ago yesterday, tens of millions of Americans were glued to their televisions, watching the terror and its aftermath in New York City, Washington, DC, and Pennsylvania. Around three thousand people lost their lives in the dastardly attacks, shattering marriages, families, careers, businesses, and a host of dreams and aspirations. It also shattered the psyche of America, the free, the proud, the brave, and the complacent.

In the days after September 11, 2001, a few brave souls linked the tragedy to America's increasingly immoral lifestyle, but many of these initially courageous people were shouted down, lampooned, and condemned for their "callous and judgmental" remarks. Because they are unfamiliar with spiritual laws and processes, most people see no link between so-called natural disasters and behavior. However, Christians have no excuse, as this principle is clearly a biblical one.

[God](#) explains it in his instructions to Israel just after receiving the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai:

Do not defile yourselves with any of these things [[sexual immorality](#)]; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you. For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants. You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations, either any of your own nation or any stranger who dwells among you (for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who were before you, and thus the land is defiled), lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that were before you. ([Leviticus 18:24-28](#))

The apostle Paul puts this more generally in [Galatians 6:7-8](#): "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life." In other words, as Paul writes in [Romans 6:23](#), "The wages of [sin](#) is death."

We are all sinners, so we all deserve death—it is as simple as that. None of us is really innocent. The people who died in [the World Trade Center](#), the Pentagon, and in western Pennsylvania were indeed innocent of the causes for which the Islamic terrorists justified their violence. In that sense, they were "[innocent victims](#)," and we properly mourn them and sympathize with their survivors. However, as human beings living in bondage to human nature, they were not—and neither are the living.

This begs the question, then: Did the events of September 11, 2001, cause us to make the proper changes? In the United States as a whole, we have clamored for the government to protect us better, to avenge our fallen fellow citizens, and to act so that such a calamity will never happen again. These are certainly logical changes that should be made—and frankly, should have been made years ago. Yet, these are all external changes. What changes have we made personally, internally, spiritually, behaviorally?

The [book of Amos](#) is all about this principle. God wants us to evaluate ourselves, our morality, and our relationship with Him in light of what is

happening within the nation. Our sins play a part in the collective immorality of the nation, and He wants us to own up to them and change our ways. God says in [Amos 4:11-12](#): "I overthrew some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you were like a firebrand plucked from the burning; yet you have not returned to me,' says the LORD. 'Therefore thus will I do to you, O Israel; and because I will do this to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel!'" God allowed a disaster to occur, and because He saw no change in the people, He sent an even greater one.

We do not know if that is what will happen. However, as the homosexual agenda strengthens, as our culture becomes more vulgar and sexual, as injustice and ungodliness increase, God is watching. He has shown in the pages of the Bible what He has done in the past, and He says He does not change ([Malachi 3:6](#); [Hebrews 13:8](#)). We *will* reap what we sow. Is it not time to consider whether we have learned the right lessons from 9-11?

- Richard T. Ritenbaugh

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[Examining God's Judgments](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

Judgment includes the actual process of handing down a decision. In this aspect of judgment, sanctification and purification bring about a restoration or refreshing in which liberty and reconciliation is restored. The seven reconciliations, or regatherings include: (1) Judah and Jesus Christ, (2) Israel and Judah, (3) Israel, Assyria, and Egypt, (4) All nations, (5) Man and nature, (6) Families, and (7) Ultimately God and mankind. We can accelerate this process by fearing God and keeping his commandments (Ecclesiastes 12: 13).

From the Archives: Featured Article

Is God to Blame?

by John W. Ritenbaugh

The September 11 bombings were certainly tragic and terrible. Some have since asked, "Was God involved? Is He to blame?" John Ritenbaugh soberly answers some of these tough questions, concluding that God certainly allowed them to occur for our ultimate and eternal benefit.

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