

Mary Craig Ministries, Inc.

Series: "How to Survive in the Kingdom of God"



Message: "The Law of Reciprocity"

Dr. Mary Craig

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We're in our series, "How to Survive in the Kingdom of God." Living in that kingdom means being under God's rule and God's reign. We've been discussing the Law of Cause and Effect in which we stated that God is the Sovereign Cause and Man or Human Beings are the Responsible Moral Agents and Secondary Causes.

One aspect of the Law of Cause and Effect is "we reap what we sow" but the law we're going to talk about today is often called the Law of Reciprocity.

Basically it's when we talk about "As we give, so it will be given unto us" or "As we do unto others, so it will be to us"; "As we extend mercy, so God will extend mercy." I call this "As we do, God will do." "As you do to others, God will do to you." And "as you do to God, God will do to you."

So let's look at this first one. Under "[As we do, God will do.](#)" For this we're going to turn to the book of Obadiah in the Minor Prophets. Obadiah's located in the Bible between Amos and Jonah. In verses 15, 16, and 21 of Obadiah, we find this:

"For the day of the Lord upon all nations is near. As you have done, it shall be done to you. Your reprisal shall return upon your own head." "Because just as you drank on my holy mountain, all the nations will drink continually. They will drink and swallow and become as if they had never existed." "The deliverers will ascend Mount Zion to judge the Mountain of Esau and the Kingdom will be the Lord's." So here we can see as we do, God shall do to us.

In a season of judgment and divine justice, God righteously judges evil and punishes rebellion. Through judgment comes deliverance. God delivers and brings salvation to His people and restores His righteous ones and His righteousness, and His righteous order, that His people might take joy in Him. God is the Mighty Hero Who Saves. That's one of my favorite names for God and I call upon His Name, the Mighty Hero Who Saves, quite often.

God wants us to take joy in Him and in His salvation. Everyone, everything is under the dominion of the One, True, and Living God, the Creator, Source, and Sustainer of all life. And therefore, God is worthy of honor, praise, trust, and obedience.

We've talked about Jeremiah 18:5-11 and verses 15-17 before but let's just turn there to Jeremiah 18 and consider that again today. Now as I read this, remember that we're talking about the Law of Reciprocity - As we do, God will do. "As you do to others, God will do to you."

Where does that come from? Listen to Jeremiah 18:5-11, "Then the word of the Lord came to me saying, 'Can I not O house of Israel deal with you as this potter does?' declares the Lord. 'Behold, like the clay in the Potter's hand, so are you in My hand O house of Israel. At one moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to uproot, to pull down, or

to destroy it. If that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent concerning the calamity I've planned to bring on it. Or in another moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to build up, or to plant it. If it does evil in My sight by not obeying My Voice, then I will think better of the good with which I had promised to bless it. So now then speak to the men of Judah and against the inhabitants of Jerusalem saying "Thus says the Lord: Behold I am fashioning calamity against you and devising a plan against you. O turn back, each of you from its evil way and reform your ways and your deeds."

And then in verses 15-17, "For My people have forgotten Me. They burn incense to worthless gods and they have stumbled from their ways, from the ancient paths, to walk in bypaths not on a highway, to make their land a desolation and an object of perpetual hissing. Everyone that passes by it will be astonished and shake his head. Like an east wind I will scatter them before the enemy, I will show them My back and not My face in the day of their calamity." So as we do to God, God will do to us. Notice that here God's voice was not obeyed and He was forgotten.

The key to the Law of Cause and Effect is the admonition "Remember the Lord thy God." Let's see what happens when we do that in conjunction with this Law of Reciprocity. As we do to God, God will do to us. You see, Jeremiah 18:15 says that when we forget God, we have caused ourselves to stumble in our ways. We corrupt ourselves. God holds us accountable for our responses to Him and He acts accordingly.

Romans 15:5 says "Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

And in 1 Peter 5 we read, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you at the proper time. Casting all your anxiety upon Him because He cares for you. Be of sober spirit. Be on the alert. Your adversary the devil prowls about like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour, but resist him firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace who called you to His eternal glory in Christ will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen."

God yields the good things of the kingdom first of all to those who struggle. Secondly to those who keep on asking, seeking, and knocking. Third, to those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Fourth, to those who press on and press through. God rewards diligence, faithfulness, and persistence as we will come to see.

First of all, let's consider God yielding the good things of the kingdom to those who struggle. The one who is determined to achieve God-given goals despite obstacles and tribulation, wins. God rewards those who diligently seek Him. This struggling and wrestling demonstrates a persistent, aggressive faith.

Our example is Jacob. Didn't you guess? And we find that in Genesis 32. Jacob was alone and a man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. Now when he saw that he did not prevail against him, he touched the socket of his hip and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as he wrestled with him. This is pain, folks. And he said, "Let me go for the day breaks." But he said, meaning Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." This is persistence even in the pain. So he said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob" and he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob but Israel." Some say the name "Israel" means Prince with God. Others say the meaning is "God rules." The literal meaning, one who fought/struggled with God, comes

from Genesis 32: “For you have struggled with God and with men and have prevailed.” Then Jacob asked, “Tell me your name, I pray.” And then he said, “Why is it that you ask about my name?” and he blessed him there.

What do we learn from this? Jacob wrestled and won the blessing. It cost him, but the blessing had supreme value and was worth the price he paid. You see Jacob was willing to contend with God at a time of desperate need in his life. He knew that God had willed to bless him and he would settle for nothing less than the full inheritance. He had tenacity and it caused him to prevail. He persevered for what his inheritance was to be. And this is what we need to do as well. We must accept nothing less than our full inheritance in Jesus Christ. What is ours in Jesus Christ, all that Jesus Christ has accomplished for us, we are to seek after and seek the Holy Spirit who applies to us what Jesus has accomplished. God is building and planting a kingdom -- the kingdom of God. He tells us to obey His voice. He tells us to remember Him.

Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not/do not lose heart. Galatians 6:9 KJV

God yields the good things of the kingdom to those who fight the good fight, finish the race, and keep the faith. May God grant us perseverance to finish even as He preserves us and is faithful to keep covenant with us.

## Mary Craig, D. Min.

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