

# The Passion Of Missions



- The Commission to Sow
- The Promise to Receive
- The Winds to Ignore

***“If you wait for perfect conditions, you will never get anything done.”*** (Ecclesiastes 11:4)

Bill Kirk

# The Passion of Missions

**Text:** Ecclesiastes 11:1-6

**Subject:** How God Admonishes and Encourages Us to Seize the Moment At Hand!

## Introduction

Ecclesiastes 11:1-6 is an incredible word from God to every Christian worker!

**Question:** What is it that God talks about to all who labor in His vineyard? (Four Truths)

1. He gives us the non-negotiable command to live with **obedience** and sow good seed,
2. He overcomes discouragement by promising we will be **rewarded** for our labors.
3. He warns us against waiting for the “**perfect situations**” before we become intentional.
4. He teaches us clearly that the **atmosphere of expectancy** is the breeding ground for miracles.

**Question:** How does God destroy selfishness in our text?

**Question:** How does God guarantee us a return for our labor?

**Question:** How does God prepare us to “get moving” and “keep moving”?

**Question:** How does God pour faith in the heart of every effective laborer?

**Answer:** The Lord gives us four absolutes to live by:

## I. **The Bread Encourages You (To Live Selfless)**

**Notice:** “*Cast your bread upon the waters.*” (v. 1a)

**Question:** What is the bread that God refers to here?

**Answer:** This is an agricultural reference to a farmer on the banks of the Nile River.

- Every year when the waters subsided, the farmer went forth upon the mud and wetlands.
- He would (without any plowing) cast grain over the mud.
- The goats would trample the grain in the ground (and the farmer knew that fruit would be coming).

**Question:** But why does God say “*Cast your bread (and not seed) upon the waters*”?

**Answer:** Because God knows our human tendency is to yield to “**instant gratification**” and not look “**long term**” (as we view our life on earth).

In other words, we have two choices before us everyday:

- #1. We can spend our lives on ourselves alone (and use all of our **temporary** seed for the moment) or
- #2. We can look long term and sow into the Vineyard (and prepare for **eternal** bread down the road).

### In Plain Vanilla

- We can spend all of our resources (seed) on ourselves today (or)
- Forego instant gratification for the sake of the days to come (**bread for tomorrow**)

### In Other Words

- I can keep all of my seeds to myself (or) I can turn them into bread for the future!

(It's either/or)

I can keep my life (and lose it) or I can lose my life (and keep it)!

(Only two choices)

1. I can be absorbed in myself and live only for temporary (selfish) gratification (or)
2. I can deny myself and turn my seed into bread for the future.

## II. The Reward Encourages You (to Live with Patience)

*"...for you will find it after many days."* (v. 1b)

Question: What has God promised to those who choose to live an unselfish life?

Question: What does God have in store for those who deny themselves for the sake of His Kingdom?

Question: What awaits the laborer who sows and sows with a patient spirit?

***"You will find it after many days."*** (v. 1b) (Which means):

1. We have a moral duty to discharge! (and)
2. We have a guarantee from God that the seeds we sow will germinate and multiply!

***"You will find it after many days"*** means:

- Vegetation may be slow, but it is **sure** to come!
- God never loses **sight** of your "work of faith"
- No work done in "His Name" is ever in **vain**!

(Remember this)

- The seed that was sown in past generations is bearing fruit today, and it will be so once more with the seed we sow! (I repeat)

Question: What is the danger for every seed sower in the local church?

Answer: The danger is to become **impatient** between the time we sow and the time we reap!

(In Other Words)

- It's possible to lose heart prematurely (and be detoured)!
- It's possible to yield to enemy lies (fiery darts) that come to your mind!

(It's possible to forget Mark 4:28)

*"For the earth yields crops; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full grain in the ear."*

*(It's possible to forget that)*

- At times God's work is invisible, but God is working even when you cannot see Him!

*"Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain."* (James 5:7)

### III. The Warning Encourages You (to Live with Urgency)

*"He that observes the wind will not sow; and he that regards the clouds will not reap."* (v. 4)

Question: What's the danger that faces every laborer in the vineyard?

(The danger is)

Answer: To look for the "**perfect circumstances**" or wait for the "**ideal situation**" before we jump in full speed (with passion)!

God exposes our temptation here:

- We can "**observe the wind**" and "**regard the clouds**" which means:
  1. It's possible to be **deterred** and distracted in our labors.
  2. It's possible to be **overwhelmed** by present difficulties.
  3. It's possible to be **timid** in the face of contrary winds and stormy clouds.
  4. It's possible to be **idle** because of unfavorable surroundings.
  5. It's possible to be a **fair** weather sower who looks for the "**perfect conditions**"

Question: What does God have to say about those who wait for a more "**favorable day**"?

Answer: He forbids us to procrastinate - **because lack of complete knowledge is no excuse for inactivity.**

(In Other Words)

- There will always be the opportunity to make excuses for the neglect of our duty.
- There will always be the risk of abuse, rejection or failure.
- There will always be the possibility of seeds falling on unproductive soil.

(So remember)

- Wind, rain and clouds refer to adverse conditions surrounding you!
- Satan wants your eye on the wind and clouds.
- God wants your eyes on Him (and His ability to anoint what you are doing).

I love Psalm 121

*"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth."* (v. 1,2)

#### IV. The Unknown Encourages You (to Live by Faith)

*“For thou knowest not what evil shall be on the earth”.* (v. 2)

*“For thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit”.* (v. 5)

*“Thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.”* (v. 5b)

*“For thou knowest not what shall prosper.”* (v. 6)

Question: Why cast your bread, give your life away and live with urgency and passion?

Question: Why keep sowing in the face of criticism, rejection and no appreciation?

Question: Why step up your efforts when visible results and fruit are slow in coming?

Question: Why plan long term and become intentional about taking incremental steps to reach more people?

Question: Why invest your life in something greater than yourself ?

(Why?)

1. Because by constant sowing through all kinds of weather - you demonstrate that you have **faith** and **confidence** in God (regardless of the winds and clouds).
2. Because doing what you can do - is better than lamenting and murmuring that **others** have it better.
3. Because God is not **limited** in power - He can give a spiritual breakthrough in response to your praying and sowing.

Question: Why does God say (in v. 6) *“In the **morning** sow your seed and in the **evening** withhold not your hand”?*

Answer: **“Morning”** and **“Evening”** are two extremes mentioned to include the whole.

In Other Words

- Throughout every day and every season (**joyful or painful**) being faithful in sowing reveals that you are not observing the winds nor regarding the clouds.

#### **Constant perseverance from morning till evening...**

1. Gives God the opportunity to **reward** your faith!
2. Gives God the opportunity to **prove** Himself faithful!
3. Gives God the opportunity to **honor** His word which says:

***“In due season we will reap if we faint not.”*** (Galatians 6:9)

***“Be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherited the promises.”*** (Hebrews 6:12)

Question: How does God destroy all procrastination in His work force?

Answer: He tells us to look at two things in (v. 5)

*“Look at the **wind**”* (and) *“Look at the **womb** of a pregnant mother.”*

In Other Words

- Since you can't explain the invisible course of wind and how it flows (and )
- Since you can't explain the formation of bones in the fetus of a pregnant woman,

Realize how much you do not know!

### Here's what God is saying:

- Just because we don't know everything and have all the answers beforehand, **that shouldn't keep us from doing what we can do (with passion).**

In Other Words

- Don't let what you **can't** do (and do not know) paralyze what you **can** do!

Because

- We all have **opportunity** in front of us to see God work the miraculous on our behalf.

### What God says to me in Ecc. 11:1-6

(That strengthens my heart)

1. There is no reason to expect a harvest until I have **first** “**cast my bread upon the waters**”
2. I have a promise from God that He **will** honor my sowing “**after many days**”
3. I can forget finding the “**perfect season**” to get busy for God (and be intentional **now** in strategic planning to reach lost people).
4. Since we “**knoweth not how**” God is going to honor His Word, let's labor from “**morning till evening**” in **faith** and confidence.

And...

- Sow seeds though conditions may seem unfavorable (for what good is it to pray for rain from heaven if we have not first sowed seed into the ground?)
- Sow seeds with urgency and **passion** in the local church.
- Sow seeds (for **future** bread) so that our lives won't be wasted.
- Sow seeds regardless of how you **feel** and what others do!
- Sow seeds in secret (and in public) knowing that we will **reap** if we faint not.

**Question:** Why live in constant prayer and be motivated with passion by the Holy Spirit!

**Answer:** Because daily encounters with God will enable you to press on regardless of the wind and the clouds around you!

### Altar Call

- ◆ **The Lord wants to give you His Passion!**
- ◆ **The Lord wants to give you His Urgency!**
- ◆ **The Lord wants to give you His Faith!**
- ◆ **The Lord wants to set your heart aflame and send you out full of the Holy Spirit.**

Amen!  
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