

23.1 Reap What You Sow

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Preparation

Search and display an image of the 'Six Nations' Rugby Tournament.

So far this year we have focused a lot on how we can improve the happiness part of our well-being. We started by thinking about the phrase 'a happy new year'. Do we still think we can have a happy new year now we are a few weeks into it? We are often hopeful at the end of one year and looking at the next. The new year can seem like a blank page on the table before us ready to be turned into a great piece of artwork. But a few weeks in we can sometimes think that the new year is not going like we expected. The struggle to motivate ourselves to work and arguments with family and friends may start to make us give up on the hopeful feelings we had at the start of the year. It is like making mistakes on our clean page.

We have already suggested that happiness can be a decision, we can decide to be happy no matter what happens to us. Whether we have a clean page or whether it has a mistake that has been crossed out, we can still choose to be happy. Some of the happiest people in the world are those that can go through difficult times and still focus on the positives. We have talked about choosing to be happy, but this week we are going to think about the actions and decisions that we do now that will help us to be happier in the future.

Have you heard of the phrase 'you reap what you sow'? Like many phrases and proverbs, 'you reap what you sow' came from the Bible. To sow is a verb that means



to plant seeds or crops. To reap is a verb that involves gathering and harvesting the crop once it has grown. What do you think the phrase 'you reap what you sow' means? It means that the things that you do now will have an effect on what happens in the future. When a crop is planted, it will take time to grow before it is ready to eat. Whilst it is growing it will require the right conditions to grow properly. The weather can't be too cold, or too hot. The crops will need the right amount of water. If grown outside some potatoes, called 'first earlies', can take as little as fourteen weeks (just over three months) from being sown to being harvested. 'Maincrop' potatoes will be ready eighteen to twenty weeks after planting.

The Six Nations rugby tournament takes place in February each year. It is a popular tournament which brings together six national rugby union teams. Does anyone know which six countries are involved? (England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Italy and France.) Like any sport at this level, the players will have spent years playing the game and improving their skills. As a spectator, we see the rugby players at the top of their game. We haven't seen the hours of training that the players will have gone through. We probably don't



know about the strict diets they will have had to endure to keep their bodies in the best condition. What we get to see is the result of all that hard work. Players on the national teams are able to reap the benefits of the hard work that has gone on behind the scenes.

What we sow now will have an effect on the future. Imagine a spelling test, if you revise and practise your spellings, you will have a better chance of spelling most of them correctly in a spelling test. Imagine if you have been set the task of creating a model of an Egyptian pyramid. When you are set the homework, you want to create a masterpiece in cardboard, glue and yellow paint. The homework requires research and the time to make this object of greatness. The day before the homework is due, you realise that you have forgotten all about it. You can't find any cardboard in the house so you make do with a bit of paper. You don't have any glue so you stick it together with sellotape and you've ran out of yellow paint so you colour it in with a yellow felt-tip pen that is running out. The final creation isn't what you expected. You also forgot to research what a pyramid looks like and your finished model is a cube. Oops!

The advice 'you reap what you sow' can be used for so many different areas in our lives. If we eat too much and don't exercise, we reap what we sow. If we call each other names and are nasty to each other, we reap what we sow. If you ignore and don't practise the skills that you learn in school,

then you reap what you sow. If you practise an instrument regularly or carry on going to hockey club on a cold and wet Saturday morning, then you reap what you sow.

We have already suggested that happiness is a choice, but happiness is also something that we reap because of our actions. Think of the joy the rugby players who win the Six Nations tournament will feel. How happy will a musician feel when they master a piece of music? Will you be pleased if you get all your spellings correct? 'Reaping what we sow', reminds us that we may benefit or struggle in the future because of the choices we make now.

Time to reflect

- What have you done in the past that has helped you recently?
- What can you do today that will help you in the future?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful that we often benefit from the hard work of others and we are grateful for the joy that we can have from our actions. Help us to think about how our actions will benefit us in the future and may it be the motivation to make the right choices now. *(Amen)*

