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The Law of Consequences

By Pastor Reimar A. C. Schultze

“...whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”—Galatians 6:7

The Law of Consequences is the queen and mother of all laws. Where it is respected, immeasurable blessings will flow. Where it is despised, untold misery and damnation will be the result. The Law of Consequences is the first law of education – it is the first law by which learning takes place. A child learns that if it cries, mother will come. If it touches a hot stove, it will be hurt. Before a child knows that there is an A or a B, it knows that there is a law of consequences. This law is older than teachers, textbooks, schools, and knowledge itself. We find it at the opening of the age in these words: *“God said... and it was so”*, and we also find it at the closing of the age in the Revelation in the words, *“Blessed are they that do his commandments that they may have right to the tree of life...”* (Rev. 22:14). The Law of Consequences fills all time and space and is in operation everywhere. You find it in the movement of the heavenly bodies, in the earth below, in the life of the amoebae in a pond, fish in the sea, and birds in the sky. You find it in the rushing of the wind, the orbit of the sun, the gathering of a storm, the cool of night, and the heat of the day. It governs the Law of Gravity and Newton’s Third Law (for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction). You find this law in operation in the affairs of men, in economics, politics, science, and music. You find it at work in the human heart - in the natural as well as the spiritual heart of man. As you see from the scriptures, the Law of Consequences has two ingredients, *sowing* and *reaping*, which is to say cause and effect: *“...whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap”* (Gal. 6:7).

Notice further that the Law of Consequences works with pinpoint precision, with absolute predictability and irresistible force. You cannot fool with it, you will reap what you sow. Furthermore, notice that this Law has impeccable credibility, because God is the author of it, all nature testifies to it, and all science stands on its principles. Every cause has a predictable effect. For example if the earth’s distance from the sun is increased, it will get colder. If the opposite occurs, it will get warmer. If you warm water to 100° Celsius it will turn into steam. If you cool it to 0°, it will become solid. Jesus referred to this law when He said, *“He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it”* (Matt 10:39). He alluded to it when He said: *“Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit”* (Matt. 7:17). You reap what you sow. There is no mercy in the law of consequences. There is no variableness in it. It needs no judge; it is its own judge. It needs no interpreter; its simplicity cannot be reduced. Every action has a consequence. Every thought has a consequence. Can you think of any law more predominant, more powerful, more all-intrusive than the Law of Consequences?

Yet, despite the fact that this law fills all space and time, it is the most neglected and

ignored law in the life of the average Christian. Somehow, deep in his heart, he has come to think that God, rather than being a "God of Consequences," is a "God of Exceptions." Many seem to think "I can violate this law and get by with it, while perhaps others can't." So let me repeat our Scripture text again, but this time with the introductory phrase in bold. ***Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap***" (Gal 6:7). It is deception in our hearts and a God-mocking spirit that causes us to defy or twist the laws and promises of God and create exceptions for ourselves. It is deception that caused Eve to believe that God did not mean it when He said, "If you eat of this tree you will die." In her mind, the God of holiness and justice had somehow become a God of permissiveness, a God who does not mean what He says.

For anyone to say "God is a God of Exceptions" is to recreate God, to make Him something He is not. It is us creating our own God to suit our lifestyle. It is paganism! It is idolatry! My friend, God clearly said of Himself: *"I am the LORD, I change not"* (Mal. 3:6). With Him, James says, there is *"no variableness, neither shadow of turning"* (Ja. 1:17). Again, God means what He says, and He says what He means when He says, *"The soul that sinneth, it shall die"* (Eze. 18:20). You can count on it. If we could not count on God, nor His laws, nor His promises, the foundation of our faith would crumble. That is why the psalmist said, *"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"* (Ps. 11:3). What makes us think that the God who said *"Do not lie,"* will lie?

If you obey God, He will bless you. If you disobey, He will curse you. So, embedded within the Law of Consequences there is also a system of jurisprudence. That is, within it there is right and wrong, punishment and reward. This precept was clearly laid out before Israel in Deuteronomy 11:26 -28 as the very foundation of their eternal covenant with God. *"Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day: And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known."* Don't expect to be blessed if you are disobedient; don't expect to be other than blessed if you obey.

You may never go to college, you may never obtain riches, you may never be a "somebody" in this world. You may live in a little cottage or be in prison for a season, but if you obey, God will bless you. You can count on it. It is an inviolable law of our sovereign God, and it is so because of His very nature. He cannot and will not lie and He will not deceive us. And it is by His infinite power that He is able to deliver His blessing to you in any circumstance of life. On the other hand, you may get the finest education, acquire significant wealth and be a respected person in the company of the "successful," but if you will not obey God you'll be cursed. There are no exceptions to these laws. There are no exceptions for your loved ones, "because they lived a good life", or because "they had a good heart," or "they were kind to everyone," or because "they gave so much money to the poor or to missions." Regardless of all this, if they did not obey God, they are cursed. Whether we obey or not is a matter of life and death. This is part of God's eternal covenant with man (Deut. 28:15-68; Rom. 1:30-32).

Jesus said “*strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it*” (Matt. 7:14). Yet, at nearly every funeral you get the impression from the minister that God is a God of the broad way and that His love allows for exceptions. Friend, the first law that God gave man wasn't the law of love or faith; it was the law of obedience. The first words God spoke to man were not “I love you” nor “have faith” but rather “obey or die” (Gen. 2:17). This theme is carried along into every book of the Bible. This call to obedience is at the heart of the Lord's prayer in the instruction to pray, “*Thy will be done*” (Matt. 6:10). *Thy will be done* is the core of the Bible, it is the kingdom of God, it is heaven. It is the essence of Christianity. Love and faith must never be used as escapes from the law of obedience. God will not have it. God will not allow it.

If God would occasionally make an exception in nature to the Law of Consequences, it would throw the whole physical universe into confusion. Science would collapse. If God would allow the laws of aerodynamics to fail just once in a while, you would never want to get into an airplane. If God would cancel the law of gravity for just one second we would all be sucked into space. What is true in the physical universe is true in the kingdom of God. The greatest blessing of the saint is that he can count on God. If he obeys, he shall be blessed. Thank you Jesus! By the grace of God, you can obey and be blessed.

But the Law of Consequences remains in force even when we are forgiven. Abraham was forgiven for having slept with Hagar but the consequences of that sin are still with us. We have serious conflicts and frequent wars in the Middle East to this very day because Abraham stepped out of God's plan. Every disobedience has a ripple effect that will last until the end of time. The forgiveness of sins will remove guilt, but never consequences.

Because life and death hang on this law, it must be taught to our children early in life. Parents do not teach your little ones that God is a “God of Exceptions.” You say that you don't, yet if you punish your children inconsistently you are teaching them that the Law of Consequences can't always be counted on, therefore the God Who created that Law also cannot be counted on. You teach them that God is a “God of Exceptions.” You prepare them to believe that God's promises will not always come true. You prepare them for questioning God. You prepare them for the eternal flames of hell. Almost all of the damned believed that God is a “God of Exceptions.”

You will reap what you sow. God will hold you accountable. If you spent more money than you earned you will reap disaster. If you fill your mind with the negatives of politics and economics, or with worldliness instead of the things of God, you will be discouraged and weakened in your faith. If you eat junk food you will invite diseases. You reap what you sow. If you are merciless towards others, God will be merciless towards you. You can count on it. If you are slothful in your work, and in your Christian disciplines, you will receive the reward of an unprofitable servant (Matt. 25:30). The list goes on and on. The book of Proverbs is full of examples of cause and effect. So read it often. God means what He says. Perhaps few parables of Jesus are as clear on this as the par-

able of the wedding feast. There was a man who came to the wedding without a wedding garment. He thought that God was a "God of Exceptions," at least for him. But the King said to His servants, "*bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth*" (Matt. 22:11-13).

God will do what He said He will do, don't be deceived. Don't mock God. "*Whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap*" (Gal. 6:7).

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