

# FAITH CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY

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Leviticus 19:9-10, NKJV 9 'When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap, nor shall you gather any gleaning from your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I am the LORD your God.' 10 And you shall not glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather every grape of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I am the Lord your God.

This Scripture makes me reflect back on my days as a new mom. I'm sure many of us will be able to relate. You have one child, then two. Babies are so adorable...So vulnerable...So precious...So cuddly. It was easy to forget that those precious, cuddly, adorable little ones are *sinners*. Yes, this was easy to forget, *until* they learned to talk, that is. And if your kids were anything like ours, one of the very first words they learned to say was, "MINE!" You see, I had given birth to greedy *corner reapers*. But that shouldn't have surprised me. My mom had also given birth to a greedy *corner reaper*. And so had hers...all the way back to Eve, the first one ever to look at what God had forbidden and say, "MINE!" And every generation has been screaming, "MINE!" ever since.

But God in His faithfulness knew that not reaping to the corners would not just come naturally to any of us. No, it would need to be taught. That's why He had to make it a law. Because I cannot recall ever feeling the need to tell my kids that they were sharing too much. If looking past their own wants was ever going to happen, we as their parents were going to have to teach them...again...and again. As my mom did for me, and her mom did for her....Again...all the way back to Eve - [*although the whole Cain killing Abel thing seems to have been a big swing and a miss*].

"There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry, Mine!"

Abraham Kuyper

Therefore - He has every right to expect that I obey His commands. He has every right over how I spend money, how I spend time, how I serve....He has every right over the way I live this life He has given to me. The above Scripture reveals this with the biggest exclamation point ever when He says, "I am the Lord your God."

But our temptation is to forget this. Our temptation is to allow so many things to crowd into our time, our finances, our lives that there we go again, to the very corners, edging out any, or very little opportunity for service to our Lord in whatever way He directs.

You see, in the same way technology didn't take long to come up with a way to reap to the corners of their fields...to harvest *every last grape, every last vegetable, every last bail of cotton*, etc. Sorry you who are impoverished, sorry widows...we've got a new invention called a combine. Thank you John Deere! Even back in the early 1800s, it took an entire family all day to harvest their crop. Today, the same task takes just seconds for one man in one combine. And it gets to EVERY SQUARE CORNER!



I have noticed a similarity in a lot of companies today. I'm sure this has happened to you. You are standing at the cash register at the market, they give you the total for your groceries, and while your mind is spinning over that amount...they ask you if you'd like to add a few more dollars for their charity. Now don't get me wrong, I think it's awesome to give to charity. But these companies are *not* giving to charity...you are. I remember when they used to take from their profits to give, now they just take more from your wallet, while they get the credit. That's what I call reaping to the corners! I'm always tempted to let them know that they can happily take it out of the profit from my purchase, but I never have the nerve.

But think about it - when we remove all margins from our life so there's little left in service to God, or in giving to God by way of blessing others, aren't we are behaving in the same way? This is not the way He wants us to live. In fact, this is a terrible way to live. People who are obsessed with their own *wants, needs, and desires* are the most miserable people you will ever meet. Yes, we are to be good stewards, of course. We shouldn't be foolish with anything God has provided. But at the same time, there should be a generosity toward God, which moves our hearts to be of service to Him and to be open-handed to those in need around us. This is how God designed that we should live, which in the end brings all glory to Him.

**Matthew 5:16, NIV**

*16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*

**Ephesians 2:10, NIV**

*10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

*God prepared good works in advance for us to do.* This is what He wants from us. This is His plan for us to extend His love to those in need around us. But also - this is good *for us!* When we live in this way, it keeps us from a perspective that labels everything that we see, "MINE!"

If I may brag on the precious people of Faith Christian Assembly for a moment...We put a call out during offering a few weeks back, as we do every year to help some of the youth in our district get to Youth Camp, specifically those who cannot afford it, and would otherwise be unable to go. Youth camp this year is \$258 per camper. You can imagine how that can easily be a hardship for some. We were so thrilled how many quickly and generously responded to this need. We even had some who don't attend our church give toward this need. And because of their generosity, 17 kids, who otherwise would not have been able to afford it, are going to Youth Camp! When Gary delivered the check to the youth pastor, he was thrilled. You see, he too used to be one of those kids who couldn't afford to go to camp. He told Gary that he believes it was Faith Christian Assembly who made it possible for him to go to Youth Camp, where God touched his heart, and today he is in ministry.

I close with a couple of my favorite quotes on this subject.

"Love so amazing so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all."

*Isaac Watts*

"Do all the good you can,  
By all the means you can,  
In all the ways you can,  
In all the places you can,  
At all the times you can,  
To all the people you can,  
As long as ever you can."

*-John Wesley*