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CHAPTER

14

We Reap What We Sow

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Garry tightened his tie and grabbed his suit jacket from the back of the swivel chair in front of his desk. He glanced at the clock. 1p.m. Friday afternoon office activities were proceeding as usual, but Garry was oblivious to them. His mind was obsessed with thoughts of his most important company assignment to date.

As he grabbed his car keys off his desk and headed for the door, his mind focused on the details – he’d lost count of how many times he’d thought about them. Flight out tonight. Meet with engineers tomorrow and Sunday to collect and test final data. Back Sunday night. Wrap up report. Presentation on Monday morning at 11.

He grinned as he thought about the ingenious experiment he’d devised to test the hypothesis. They said it couldn’t be done, but he was about to supply data that would prove them wrong. If the board accepts this – no, wait a minute – *when* the board accepts this on Monday – I’ll be set.

He was home before he knew it. As he opened the front door, his wife, Susan, glanced up. He sure looks happy, she thought. I wonder what’s up.

Garry dropped his briefcase and spun her around in a tight hug.

“What’s with you, Garry? You look like you just won a million dollars!” said Susan.

“Well, you never know – you never know,” said Garry with a sly grin.

“C’mon, tell me!” begged Susan.

“As a matter of fact, I want to talk to you and the kids,” said Garry. I have something to share. Brandon, Sarah,” called Garry. “Could you please come into the family room? I’d like to tell you something.”

Twelve-year-old Brandon and fourteen-year-old Sarah sauntered into the room.

“Hi, Dad,” said Sarah. “What’s up?”

“Well, guys,” said Garry slowly. “You know that I’ve been out of town a lot this past few months, and even when I’m not, I’ve worked a lot of late nights.”

“That’s for sure,” exclaimed Brandon. “It seems like we hardly ever see you. I feel like I don’t have a Dad!”

“I know, son,” said Garry. “But I’ve been working on a very important project that will help our family a lot. When the Board accepts my proposals on Monday morning, that means I’ll be home a lot more. It will also mean that we’ll have money to do some of those things we’ve talked about.”

“But, Garry,” said Susan. “How can you be so sure the board will accept them?”

“Well, because this time, I’ve prepared a lot better. I studied and learned about the important laws needed for the experiments. Then, I organized them in a way that the lab people would know how to work with them in the right order to achieve my purpose.”

“What did you mean, Dad, when you said *this time*?” asked Sarah.

“I just meant that I had a good opportunity about four years ago, but, at that time, I didn’t know much about the sage laws for success, so I blew it.”

“Sage laws?” asked Brandon. “What are those?”

“They’re fundamentals, or basic laws, that people need to obey if they’re going to achieve success in any part of their lives – this includes school, work, and family life.”

“How did you learn about them, Dad?” asked Sarah.

“Well,” interjected Susan, “Dad was feeling really upset with himself when the other opportunity didn’t work out, and he didn’t know quite what to do. But he had a very good friend who understood the situation.”

“That’s right,” said Garry. “He helped me to see that the failure I’d experienced wasn’t the end of the world – even though at the time I thought it was. He said that this was called opposition, and

that it was a necessary part of learning and growing. Everybody has to face it in one way or another.”

“Kind of like when I want to watch my favorite TV show and Sarah wants to watch something different, so we argue about it?” queried Brandon.

“Yes,” said Garry. “And what do you do to solve the problem?”

“We agree to take turns,” said Sarah. “One night, he watches his show, and the next night, I watch mine. That works pretty good.”

“So then you’ve brought balance back into the situation,” explained Garry. “That’s what my friend helped me to learn. Even though I’d *fumbled the ball*, so to speak, I needed to get back in the game. That’s when I started looking for another project. My friend had coached me so well in cultivating the sage laws, that when I learned about this project, I knew that I could apply them and be successful. The first thing to do was thoroughly prepare. Then I could organize things in order to achieve my purposes, just like I told you a few minutes ago.”

“Once you knew this stuff, Dad, was it easier to make the project work?” asked Sarah.

“Well, it was easier in one way because I knew exactly what fundamentals I had to obey, but that didn’t mean that opposition left me alone. There were lots of problems at times: things like experiments that didn’t work because somebody didn’t follow directions, incomplete reports because the secretary was off sick for two weeks and the information wasn’t passed on to her, the lab was without power for three days so experiments couldn’t be done and we got behind schedule. There were many more issues, but thanks to my sage friend, I could think them through and get the experiments done, the reports fixed and generally work with my team of people to get things back into balance. I learned to trust my feelings the way I used to. For the most part, things worked out very well. Sure helped to build up my self-confidence!”

“So how will all of this help our family?” asked Susan.

The kids nodded. They had been wondering the same thing.

“That’s the best part, guys,” said Garry excitedly. “I’ve obeyed the sage laws. I’ve made good choices. I have great confidence that because of these things, the board will accept my findings. That means that I won’t have to travel. I’ll get to work normal hours and be home with all of you so we can do neat things together – we’ll even have the money to do them.”

The whooping and cheering from his family confirmed to Garry that the past months of sacrifice had been worth it.

He explained that he needed to make one more trip to finalize his preparations, but it would be the last one.

“Awesome! We’re with you, Dad!” yelled Sarah.

“Good luck, Dad – we can hardly wait for you to get back!” shouted Brandon.

The smile on Susan’s face was huge – this was going to be a good year!

Garry checked his watch. Almost time to leave for the airport, he thought.

He left his excited family and started towards the den to collect the maps he’d need to take with him.

Suddenly, he stopped abruptly, his smile frozen on his face. Oh, no! What have I done? The three pages of data from the first part of the experiment – they’re still in the computer! Where am I going to get 2 hours between now and Monday to analyze them? Maybe I could leave them out? No way – they have to be there or the rest of the report doesn’t make sense. How could I have been so stupid? I...

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the
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