

# **Seeing Christ in the Seasons of Life**

*[She] shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water,*

*that brings forth its fruit in its season.*

**Scripture Reading: Psalm 1**

Speakers Faye Radtke & Carol Helland

Ladies' Bible Retreat

March 3-5, 2022

## **Introduction: God's Ordained Seasons**

The seasons of life reflect a progression of change from one season to another. As surely as seasons direct the course of nature, so they direct the course of our lives.

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). The nine "fruit" is singular, so the fruit come all together—reflections of Christ's character as seen through the Spirit-filled believer.*

### **Seeing Christ in the Seasons of Life**

#### ***The Fruit of Spring and Summer***

*But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits (James 3:17).*

Speaker Faye Radtke

March 3, 2022

**Spring: A Season of Re-Birth:** *I am the vine, you are the branches; He who abides in me, and I in Him, bears much fruit, for without Me you can do nothing (John 15:5).*

**All Things Have Become New:** In spring, everything is brand new. Spiritually, we can liken this to when we first get saved, for everything is new. *Therefore if anyone is in Christ, [s]he is a new creation; old things have passed away, behold, all things have become new (1 Corinthians 5:17).* The Christian life is a new life by the Power of the Holy Spirit.

**Rain from Heaven:** *He gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness (Acts 14:17b).* The Lord wants to use the "rain" in our lives to see His love in a deeper way to grow us. In His gentle love, God guides us to bear the fruit of the Spirit. You can bloom where you are planted.

**Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth** (Ecclesiastes 12:1). *For you are my hope, O Lord, GOD; You are my trust from my youth (Psalms 71:5).*

**God doesn't promise a trial-free life, but He promises to go with us and before us.** *And the Lord is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed (Deuteronomy 31:8).*

**The Spring of Your Life—More New Things:** Moving from parents' home; college; work; military; making your own decisions (dating, marriage, entertainment, career, friends, church, social pressures). Rejection can also be present in your social interactions and greatly affect you. *Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world* (I John 4:4). "The Bummer Lamb Story."

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart; and lean not to your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your path.* (Proverbs 3:5-6). It's important to seek the Lord daily because you can't trust a God you don't know.

**We try to figure God out when we don't know nor understand His ways.**

**"Springs of Living Water":** Getting to know our lovingly heavenly Father is as refreshing as a spring. Jesus Christ exudes life.

**Everyone will make mistakes sometimes, but we need to admit when we're wrong.** God use our mistakes to humble us.

**Are you in the springtime of your life?** Trust in the Lord; seek to know Him; rest in God's timing to fulfill your dreams.

**Summer: A Season of Renewal:** *Blessed is the [wo]man who trust in the Lord, and whose hope is in the Lord, for [s]he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river and will not fear when heat comes, but its leaf will be green and will not be anxious in the year of drought, not will cease from yielding fruit* (Jeremiah 17:7-8).

**Seasons are designed to deepen and instruct us in the wisdom of God—to grow stronger and fruitful and have our roots grow deeper and watered by the Word.** "That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith . . . being rooted and grounded in love" (Ephesians 3:17).

**Love: The First Fruit.** All other fruit flow from the fruit of "Love." **The Vine: John 15:1**

**Pruning and Weeding:** These are purposeful activities that we allow God to do. "My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that bears not fruit, He takes away, and every branch that bears fruit, He purges it that it may bring forth more fruit" (John 15:1-2, OKJ).

**The purpose of life is to know God—to love and walk with God—that is "to see God."** "I have heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You" (Job 42:5). Why is this so important? *God has created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created* (Revelation 4:11, OKJ). *We were intended to be the delight of God and the object of*

*His affection. In perfect cyclic movement, being, power and joy, descended from God to man in the form of a gift and returned from man to God in the form of obedient love and ecstatic adoration (C.S Lewis). If God's whole purpose of His plan of creation and redemption was to bring us into a relationship with Him . . . we can be quite sure that this will be the one great object of all His dealings with us.*

***Green Leaf in Drought Time by Isobel Kuhn:*** Summer can be a dry season—no doubt a tough season when the Lord seems quiet, or you feel unheard or overwhelmed with the busyness of this season. *"So in the midst of our scorching drought, the little trees can put forth tendrils of green leaves of faith in His Word."*

My cloud of battle-dust may dim,

His veil of splendor, curtains Him.

And, in the midnight of my fear,

I may not feel Him standing near.

But as I lift mine eyes above,

His banner over me is love. ~Gerald Massy

**Conclusion:** Enjoy your summer season. It can be a very fruitful time of getting to know the Lord and building your relationship with Him.

## Seeing Christ in the Seasons of Life

### *A Walk through Fall and Winter*

*To everything there is a season; a time for every purpose under heaven.*

Speaker Carol Helland

March 4, 2022

**Scripture Reading: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8**

### **Everything Has Its Time**

1). "To everything there is a season," and 2. "A time for every purpose under heaven."

### **A Walk through Fall: A Season of Reflection**

*Therefore be patient until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also be patient (James 5:7-8).*

As we think of the fall season of our lives, quietly, without fanfare, God moves upon our lives in the same manner as the seasons, taking us from summer to fall. Fall represents a time of transition, learning to walk with the Lord in new ways.

**Number Our Days:** *Teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom (Psalm 90:12).*

**Buy Up Opportunities:** *"\*Redeeming the \*time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:16). \*Redeem is exagorazo, "to buy up for one's self or one's advantage." What this means is to "make a wise use of every opportunity God has given us." \*Time is not "time as such" but "opportunities," kairos in the Greek, which means "seasons." So we are to "make the most of every epoch-making, seasonable opportunity." May we measure every day with an eternal yardstick!*

**A Walk in Love:** *And \*walk in love, as Christ also has \*loved us, and has given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma (Ephesians 5:2). \*Walk is peripateo: "to order one's behavior"; "to conduct one's self." This walk in love is the \*agape love which God is, which God demonstrated at the Cross, which is the first fruit of the Spirit.*

**The Fruit of Longsuffering (Patience):** *Now may the God of \*patience and comfort grant you to be likeminded toward one toward another, according to Christ Jesus (Romans 15:5). \*Patience is hupomone, "steadfast, constancy, endurance"; "to stay put and stand fast when you'd like to run away." Many Greek scholars think that "longsuffering" refers to patience with people, and "endurance" refers to patience with situations and trials.*

**If someone is trying your patience, it helps to remember . . .**

1. God extends His patience to me every day. We do not endure people; we love them. *May we walk with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love (Ephesians 4:2).*
2. Change is a process, not a one-time event.
3. The God of patience lives inside me by His Spirit.
4. The Word of God and prayer are two sources of spiritual patience from which we may draw strength.
5. Someday you will be at the receiving end of patience—you can count on it.

**Love and Marriage:** *"Love endures all things" (1 Corinthians 13:7).*

**The Words of My Mouth:** *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer (Psalm 19:14).*

*Even so the \*tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! . . . Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My [sisters], these things ought not to be so (James 3: 5 & 10). \*The smallest but largest troublemaker is the tongue. No one can tame the tongue. The tongue can be an instrument of evil or an instrument of blessing, depending on whether or not it is harnessed by the Spirit of God.*

*"Your influence on your husband will make him or break him. You can make your husband a great man. You have the influence and the power to do that. And I've come to the conclusion that with very few exceptions, the wife is the marriage partner who holds the marriage and the home together" (The Powerful Influence of the Christian Woman by Donna Radtke, Grace Gospel Press).*

**The Power of Words:** *Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one (Colossians 4:6).*

1. **"Please" and "Thank you."**
2. **"I'm sorry. Will you forgive me?"** These words have a way of breaking down walls and building bridges. Forgiveness is crucial in marriage.

3. **"I love you."** I'm not just referring to romance with these words, for they go much deeper than that. "I love you" is a statement that carries tremendous power. *It is not only necessary to love; it is necessary to say so.*
4. **"I'm praying for you."** Your husband should be the first person on your prayer list. Pray for him every day. You will find that when you talk to God about your husband, you talk to your husband about God.

**What about Love?** *Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us (Romans 5:5).*

**Inheritance from God:** *Children are an heritage from the LORD. The fruit of the womb is a reward (Psalm 127:3). Ask God for wisdom as you invest and train your children. We fall and winter season women will tell you to enjoy each moment with your child. Your children are your wealth and inheritance from the Lord. **Children are God's gifts to you, a treasure.** Thus invest in them with all that you have: your time, your attention, your care, your love, your prayers.*

### **A Walk through Winter: A Season of \*Remembrance**

*They shall bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing, to declare that the LORD is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him (Psalm 92:13-14).*

*In the midst of winter, I finally learned there was in me an invincible summer. ~Albert Camus*

\*God's Word implores us to "remember." The word "remember" is found in various forms hundreds of times throughout Scripture because God knows that we can so easily forget Him and His faithfulness.

**The Older Women . . .** *"the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior as becoming holiness . . . teachers of good things—that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children" (Titus 2:2-3).*

**A Walk in Wisdom:** *See then that you \*walk circumspectly (akribos: "exactly," "carefully"), not as fools but as wise (Ephesians 5:15). A walk is made up of steps, taken one at a time. Paul warns us that we are to "be very careful" in our walk in life. Too often when the path is easy we tend to forget this, and leap ahead of God, depending on our own wisdom and strength. But it is when the path is steep, we really know how close God is to us. "If God sends us on stony paths, He provides strong shoes" (Corrie Ten Boom).*

**Grandchildren:** *Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers* (Proverbs 17:6). We can be a source of unfailing, unquestioning, nonjudgmental, nonstop love for our grandchildren.

**The Time of My Departure:** *For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my \*departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith* (2 Timothy 4:6-8). \*Departure is such a beautiful word in the Greek. When we arrive at the winter season, we begin to think more about heaven and our eternal life in Christ, for our salvation, our glorification, is nearer than when we first believed.

*Now we know that if our earthly house, this \*tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens* (2 Corinthians 5:1). \*One meaning of departure is to take down your tent and move on. Death is simply taking down the tent, our mortal body, and moving into a glorious new dwelling place.

**My Father's House:** *In My Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you* (John 14:2).

1. **It's our Father's house, and His home is our home.** We won't feel like visitors. The Lord Jesus is preparing a place for us. He knows what we like, what we love, what brings us joy to feel at home—far better than we know.

2. And **we will be in the presence of the Lord;** Our bodies are just temporary dwelling places. When the Lord calls us home, we will receive marvelous new bodies like His, permanent bodies for all eternity. Heaven is perfect—no separation, no suffering, no tears, no more obituaries; no more funerals. God will wipe away all our tears. We will live forever in the presence of Christ—that's what heaven is—being with our Savior.

**The Path of Life:** *You will show me the path of life; In your presence is fullness of joy; At your right hand are pleasures forevermore* (Psalm 16:10-11). As you continue on your own walk, I trust you will find the Lord Jesus opening His arms of love to you as you move through your seasons of life. Take your time. Walk slowly. Know that the Lord Jesus walks before you and beside you as you consider the days, weeks, and years that He has given to you.



# **Managing Our Emotions**

## **Life Lessons from God's Word**

*Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it springs the issues of life.*

~Proverbs 4:23

Speaker Carol Helland

Ladies' Bible Retreat

March 5, 2022

**The Fruit of Self-Control:** *The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control* (Galatians 5:22-23).

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 4:21-32

**Emotions: What should we do with them?**

If we are honest with ourselves, we discover that there is too often, as James puts it, both sweet and salty water springing from the same inner fountain (James 3:11).

**Are all emotions a detriment?** That is not how God sees emotions.

*So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them . . . Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good* (Genesis 1:27, 31).

1. **God the Creator has emotions and has created us in His image, and that includes being emotional.** He created you a rich, full person and showered you with an abundance of emotions. After all, God is an emotional, relational God.
2. **God created us with emotions, so our lives might be enriched.** Our emotions were given not to control us but that we might be able to enjoy our God and our life. Think of them as "appreciators" of life.
3. **God gives emotional help and healing by the Power of the Holy Spirit when we need it.** We have the Holy Spirit who is stronger than our feelings, so we can overrule faulty, emotional information. God knew that my need as a sinner was so great that it was not enough for Him to just forgive me; He had to come and live inside me so I could live the abundant, fruitful life that He has for me.
4. **We need God's Truth—God's Word to speak to us when our emotions take over the conversation.** God has given us His guidebook for spiritual, emotional, physical, and psychological health. *Your Word is a lamp for my feet; and a light for my path* (Psalm 119:105). *God's promises are like the stars. The darker the night, the brighter they shine.*

**The Land of Emotions**

Researchers generally agree that we experience six primary emotions: **anger, sadness, surprise, shame, fear, joy**. The six "Managing Our Emotions" research led to these: **anger, self-pity, disappointment, envy, guilt, joy**.

**Anger:** *Better to dwell in the wilderness than with a contentious and angry woman*  
(Proverbs 21:19).

**What is anger?** *"Anger is a strong feeling of displeasure brought on by a real or a supposed wrong. The Greek word for anger (orge) describes a more settled and lasting kind of inward feeling. "Wrath" (thumos) indicates a sudden and agitated outburst of anger (See Colossians 3:8).*

Anger unleashed almost always leads to feelings of regret. When we lose our temper, we often do and say things we wish we hadn't. Some of us are exploders and some of us are stuffers. Negative emotions won't sit quietly awaiting further instructions. They'll move outward if we explode, and inward if we stuff.

Apparently, wrath that persists beyond sundown is uncontrolled (Ephesians 4:26-27), and it is uncontrolled wrath that harms relationships. It also gives a foothold to the devil.

*"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication. . ."* (Ephesians 6:18).

### **Managing Our Anger**

- 1. The next time you're angry, instead of venting or stuffing your hurt, stop and pray.** Talk to the Lord about your anger: *"Father, this is what I'm dealing with."* Name the emotion and sit in the presence of the Lord. The blood of Jesus Christ has taken care of that sin. And if we are at fault, we need to take steps to rectify the problem with the other person(s).
- 2. In order to control our anger, we need the power of the Holy Spirit.** The Holy Spirit is perfectly able to help us. It's a process—a day-by-day experience as we yield to Him.
- 3. We need God's Power to control our tongues.** Conversations are like small fires. The more fuel you add to them, the more they blaze. However, nothing cools a person's temper faster than a calm, quiet response. I'm not referring to stuffing our anger, but allowing the Holy Spirit to help us: *A soft answer turns away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger* (Proverbs 15:1).
- 4. We do not have to be subject to our anger.** We can decide daily (moment-by-moment) as to what ground we are on: either to be defeated or to be delighted in the Lord.

**Self-Pity:** *Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall yet praise Him, the help of my countenance and my God (Psalm 42:11).*

**Emotions have faces.** *As the water reflects the face, so the heart reflects the person (Proverbs 27:19).*

**And emotions have feet.** We offer them transportation every time we give in to the weight of disappointment or self-pity. We can learn to whine as a child, so I encourage you mothers to nip this in the bud.

**Naomi:** *All the city was excited and the women said, 'Is this Naomi?' But Naomi said to them, 'Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full and the LORD has brought me home again empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the LORD has testified against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me?' (Ruth 1: 19-21).*

**Self-pity is a roadblock to spiritual maturity, not to mention that it keeps joy and friends at bay.** That's why we need to recognize it and bring it to the Lord. When we refuse not to indulge in it, pity scampers away looking for attention from someone else.

**Practice Praise:** Memorize **Psalm 42:11**. Read **Psalm 40:2-3** and **Psalm 103**, a psalm of unmixed praise: *"Bless the LORD, O my soul; All that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits."* **Suggestion:** Write down three things each morning for which God deserves praise. *"It is always possible to be thankful for what is given rather than to complain about what is not given. One or the other becomes a habit of life."* ~Elisabeth Elliot

**Disappointment:** *The LORD will command His lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me—A prayer to the God of my life (Psalm 42:8).* Every believer has experienced God's loving activity at a pivotal moment in her life. We may not have recognized them every time, but the Lord Jesus has been actively involved in our lives from day one. It's so helpful to remember these times when discouraged.

If you are facing disappointment today, read **Psalms 42** and **43**. And **memorize Psalm 42:8**. The two psalms were intended to be sung as a single composition with three separate stanzas. Each stanza ends with virtually the same refrain: *"Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why are you disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him, the help of my countenance and my God"* (Psalm 43:5; & 42:5, & 11).

**Letting Go of Disappointment:** *Finally, [sisters], whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things (Philippians 4:8). As we think, so we live.*

Allow the Holy Spirit to break the shackles of your disappointment. *We all have sorrows and disappointments, but one must never forget that, if commended to God, they will issue in good. His own solution is far better than any we could conceive (Fanny Crosby).*

**Envy:** *Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another (Galatians 5:26). Wrath is cruel and anger a torrent, but who is able to stand before jealousy? (Proverbs 27:4).*

**Satan wants us to buy the lie that we'd be happier and more content with someone else's life. We wouldn't.** It may feel like we would, but haven't we learned that feelings are tricky things? Our feelings about someone else's perfectly wonderful life may not at all be what it seems to be. **Joseph's story in Genesis certainly illustrates the devastating effects of envy.**

**A jealous spirit or a thankful spirit?** Which will we choose? Here is a surefire way to a thankful spirit: Count your own blessings and have your friends count theirs. And as you are counting those blessings, remember, sometimes God's blessings come as trials that are God's means of giving us things we could get no other way. *How can you feel the miseries of envy when you possess in Christ the best of all portions? ~C.H. Spurgeon*

The Nine-Fold Fruit: A Comparison of Passages	
Galatians 5:22-23	I Corinthians 13:1-7
<b>Love</b>	Love does not seek its own; Love is neither selfish nor self-centered.
<b>Joy</b>	Love does not rejoice in iniquity but rather rejoices in the Truth.
<b>Peace</b>	Love is not easily provoked, but is serene and stable.
<b>Longsuffering</b>	Love suffers long and is patient.
<b>Kindness</b>	Love is merciful, thoughtful, and concerned; Love envies not.
<b>Goodness</b>	Love is great, gracious, and generous; Love is good and always good.
<b>Faithfulness</b>	Love thinks no evil but has faith in God.

<b>Gentleness</b>	Love is humble; Love does not brag nor boast.
<b>Self-Control</b>	Love does not behave unbecomingly.
	<b>Love never fails.</b>

**Joy:** *These things I have spoken to you, that My \*joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full (John 15:11). \*Joy: That inward peace and sufficiency that is not affected by outward circumstances.*

**The fruit of the Spirit is joy. Joy is a fruit that the Lord Jesus wants you to have in your life.** We can sparkle with joy because the Lord is our battery pack that empowers us to be joyful no matter how dire our circumstances appear to be. Joy is produced in us by yielding to the sweet influences of the Holy Spirit who indwells us.

**“Love, JOY, Peace”:** Look where joy grows—right between Love and Peace. Joy is a *sheltered fruit*. The only way to have joy in our life is to see its sheltering fruits, Love and Peace, are present in my life. *Joy is the great note all throughout the Bible.*~Oswald Chambers

*A cheerful heart has a continual feast (Proverbs 15:15).*

I hope you have a new understanding of how your colorful, Spirit-filled life has a part of God's great design for you. God has made us gals emotionally rich, so we can appreciate and enjoy the abundant life in Christ: *I have come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly (John 10:10).*

### **May Jesus Christ Be Praised**

When morning gilds the skies, My heart awaking cries,

May Jesus Christ be praised! Alike at work and prayer

To Jesus I repair, May Jesus Christ be praised.

Does sadness fill my mind? A solace here I find,

May Jesus Christ be praised! Or fades my early bliss?

My comfort still is this, May Jesus Christ be praised! ~Joseph Barnby

