

# *Seasons of Life*

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Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

- I. The Bible speaks of many seasons – certain or appointed times, but extended times, longer than a moment or an hour or a day, but always temporary.
- A. Summer, Winter, Spring, and Fall
  - B. Night season (dark time)
  - C. Rainy season (season of rain)
  - D. Due season (appropriate time)
  - E. Long season (waiting)
  - F. Convenient season (Felix – looking for a better time and missed the opportunity)

Acts 24:25 And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.

- G. Season of the trial of faith.

1 Peter 1:6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

- H. Whatever purpose is accomplished on earth is tied to times and seasons.

- II. Life is a cycle of seasons – not an eternal continuance of what we like best OR of what we dislike most.
- A. Not eternal spring – but not eternal winter either.
  - B. Not eternal harvest – but not eternal want, either.
  - C. There are seasons of trouble and turmoil – and seasons of blessing and ease.
  - D. It takes the bitter and the sweet.
  - E. It takes the night and the day.
  - F. It takes the summer and the winter.
  - G. There is a season of youth and there is a season of old age.
  - H. There is a season when you have small children and a season when you have grown children.
  - I. There is a season when you are a parent and a season when you are a grandparent.
- III. Life is like a vine that bears fruit.
- A. There is a time when all seems lush and green and full of strength and vigor – this is youth.
  - B. The purpose of the vine is to produce fruit and in the process the vine must give of itself until by the time the fruit is mature the vine is withered.
  - C. The vine must slowly die for the fruit to be produced.

- D. The fruit is nourishment and blessing for others, but it also contains a seed (or MANY seeds), which have the potential to produce many more vines.
  - E. Old age is the autumn of life and by the time we get there the vine is withered, but the fruit should appear, and its richness and abundance should amaze us.
- IV. Old age should be like autumn to our soul.
- A. There is an element of nostalgia in our emotions in the autumn.
    - 1. Somehow the falling leaves and the crisp air, and the pumpkins and hay bales bring back memories from the past.
    - 2. More memories are associated with autumn than any other season, or at least it is a season that brings back the memories from the past more.
    - 3. The older we get, the more we remember from the past and rehearse it in our minds.
    - 4. It seems like we have to fight that melancholy spirit in the fall, and this is something that we encounter in old age, also.
  - B. It should be a time of rejoicing in what God has done with our lives and the fruit He has produced through us and in us.
    - 1. It is the harvest time of our life and we should count our blessings and rejoice in what God has done with our life.
  - C. It should not be a season of grief and sorrow and regret for a life full of selfish choices and mistakes.
    - 1. No one will be old without having regrets and making mistakes along the way, but God extracts good, even from the bad things of our life.
    - 2. We should be thankful for those good things God has done, in spite of ourselves, and concentrate on recognizing them and counting them daily.
- V. Our way is to seek only what is good and pleasant to us. We love the sweet, but hate the bitter, and we do all we can to avoid it.
- A. We want our life to be a continual, uninterrupted feast. If left to ourselves we would be like spoiled children who refuse the good food and eat nothing but sweets.
  - B. But the food that doesn't appeal to our tastes is good for us and it is what we need to be healthy and strong.
  - C. We expect to succeed in everything we attempt to do, and we expect everything to always turn out wonderful – just like we dreamed it would.
  - D. Isn't it amazing that after 6000 years of mankind on this earth, and all the generations that have come and gone, that every person must learn for himself through hard experience that there are seasons in life?
  - E. There are times when things are blooming and then there are times when things are dying.
  - F. There are times when the leaves are budding and there are times when the leaves are dry and falling.
  - G. There are times when it is hot and there are times when it is cold.
  - H. There are times of harvest and plenty and there are times of famine and want.
  - I. This is true for each individual life, and it is also true for the church.
- VI. There is a "time to get and a time to lose," said the Preacher.
- A. If you expect to keep all you get in this life there is coming a time when you are going to be disappointed.

- B. Sometimes you get, and sometimes you lose – things, ...or friends, ...or loved ones.
- C. There are times when things go your way, but just as surely, there will be times when things don't go your way.
- D. There are times in the life of a church when life abounds and there is peace and blessing in all things, and then there are times of winter when it is cold and dry and dead.
- E. Expect it to be that way and you will be much better able to deal with it when the seasons change.

VII. "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."

- A. This is a fact from the Word of God, so everyone gets a turn to experience this in life.
- B. It doesn't matter if we are rich or poor, famous or unknown, important or not, we all experience these seasons.
- C. It sure would be a help to us if we would believe the Word of God in this matter and learn to prepare ourselves for the seasons of drought and winter.
- D. If they take us by surprise it is because of our own foolishness and unbelief.
- E. God has warned us about them and instructed us in how to deal with them. What a shame that so many are so shaken and discouraged when it comes a "time to lose," or a "time to weep"!
- F. Job realized this truth and dealt with it like a child of God should:

[Job 1:21](#) And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. –

- G. Sometimes God gives to us ...and sometimes God takes from us. Both are part of life.
- H. We should be able to truly thank God from an honest heart for both, because we know He loves us and we know that He is working to make us more like Him.
- I. That is a big job that only God can do, and He has ordained that we learn through suffering, just as Jesus did. (Hebrews 5:8)
- J. It is a fact that much more is accomplished to make us like Him when we lose than when we get.
- K. The things God subtracts from us are always those things that have us attached to this world.
- L. He never subtracts something that would leave us farther from Himself.
- M. On the contrary, those things we lose are things that once removed, will allow us to draw closer to God.
- N. He is preparing us to be in his presence for eternity and in order to do that He has to slowly cut each of the cords that have us attached to this world.
- O. Life is such that by the time the end draws near a child of God is eager to go. He has much more in Heaven that he has here on earth.
- P. He has lost his affection for things of the earth and his treasure is in Heaven, where his heart is also.
- Q. He has lost many things by then. He has lost his strength, his vision, his health, and many loved ones and friends. But there is a time to every purpose and when we suffer loss God will use it to make us better prepared to meet Him.
- R. Sure, there are times in life to be born, to plant, to heal, to build up, to laugh, to dance, to gather stones together, to embrace, to get, to keep, to sew, to speak, to love, and to have peace. That is wonderful!
- S. But that is not all life is about here on this earth.

- T. There is also a time to die, to pluck up that which is planted, to kill, to break down, to weep, to mourn, to cast away stones, to refrain from embracing, to lose, to cast away, to rend, to keep silence, to hate, and to have war.
- U. God said it would be that way. Expect it. Prepare for it. Trust God through it, because the seasons DO change. Spring doesn't last forever, but neither does the winter, and with the passing of each season you are more prepared to meet God if you are one of his children.

My Father's way may twist and turn,  
My heart may throb and ache,  
But in my soul I'm glad to know,  
He maketh no mistake.

My cherished plans may go astray,  
My hopes may fade away,  
But I'll trust my Lord to lead  
For He doth know the way.

Tho' night be dark, and it may seem  
That day will never break,  
I'll pin my faith, my all in Him,  
He maketh no mistake.

There's so much now I cannot see,  
My eyesight's far too dim;  
But come what may, I'll simply trust  
And leave it all to Him.

For by and by the mist will lift  
And plain it all He'll make,  
Through all the way, tho' dark to me  
He made not one mistake.

by A.M. Overton