

# SEASONS OF LIFE

## A Time for Everything

### Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

To everything there is a season,  
 A time for every purpose under heaven:  
 A time to be born,  
 And a time to die;  
 A time to plant,  
 And a time to pluck what 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;  
 A time to embrace,  
 And a time to refrain from embracing;  
 A time to gain,  
 And a time to lose;  
 A time to keep,  
 And a time to throw away;  
 A time to tear,  
 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.

### The God-Given Task



King Solomon was a knowledgeable man who thought a lot about the way life goes. He wrote these words in Ecclesiastes 3.

**He has made everything beautiful in its time.** Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end. We all experience change and transition in life. Sometimes life is exciting, dynamic, and we feel on top of the world. At other times we just want to go away and escape the situation – as King David said, *“Oh that I could fly away with wings like a dove”*. Now we are in Phase 2, nothing much has changed – still wearing masks, social distancing but we can dine out in small groups of 5. Churches begin to open up for mass, but with lots of restrictions. Times have changed with regards to Sunday worship. Nothing remains the same. The only constant in life is change.

### *Spring time is not forever*

Like the weather, we have spring, then summer and then autumn and winter. So where are we now? What is the temperature of the climate within us? For some maybe spring has dawned but for others the bleak of winter continues on and on. We must understand the seasons. If we do not understand that there are seasons in life, we may draw the wrong conclusions about what is happening in our lives, or the reasons for it. God has a plan and a purpose to make our life beautiful.



### **“This too shall pass”**

Change is always on its way. Like a coin with two sides, life has a way of changing. Good seasons come and go, as do bad seasons. Bad seasons do not last forever. In Ps 30:6, King David said: *“Now in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.”* Good seasons of prosperity do not last forever. The Psalms teach us that good times and bad times come and go.

### **After the storm comes the rainbow**

We don't control everything in life. There are a lot of things we can't control. Life has a way of popping up with different things. KEEP THE DREAM IN YOUR HEART AT ALL TIMES. Don't give up your God-given dreams because your circumstances have turned sour. You don't know what God can do.



God has us in a process. We can't see the scope of God's work from beginning to end. We are short sighted. In tough times where health, money, friends, marriage is not looking good we may wonder what is going on. And now with the pandemic increasing in some other parts of the world, will this ever end?

But God makes us beautiful through all the trials, circumstances in life. It is during the tough seasons that we often grow the most in our character. It is difficult to form outstanding character in seasons of pure prosperity. This is one reason why God ordains seasons where we have to fight, where things do not come easily. There can be seasons of study, unemployment and other seasons of prosperity where work is abundant. If you try to hang onto something that is in the past, it can turn sour. Don't try to push something in the wrong season. We mustn't look back all the time wishing for our favourite season of the past to return. Instead we must forget what lies behind and push forward to what lies ahead. (Philippians 3:13)

### **Wintry days fall on good and bad alike**

When bad things happen it's not a sign that you are a bad person. It's just a sign that bad things are happening. Bad things do happen to good people. Take Job for example. He had good seasons, but he is remembered for the terrible time of oppression and loss he faced. Yet he was a righteous man. Do not assume that you are worse than others if you suffer loss or go through a trial. Genesis 8:22 says, *“As long as the earth remains, there will be springtime and harvest, winter and summer, day and night.”* There are going to be seasons until Jesus returns and maybe beyond. Don't read too much into negative things that happen. Stuff happens in life.

### **Building consistency in every season**

Paul told Timothy: *“Preach the word of God, be constant in season and out of season”* (2 Timothy 4:2). We may not always understand the seasons. There will be times when things go well in church life and ministry, and other times of incredible hardship and transition. We have all gone through these times, when all the churches are shut without the sacramental life.



## Which Season of Life are you in now?

### We are not defined by the seasons of life

Don't change what you believe according to what season you are in. People often made bad decisions in tough seasons. When you are in a challenging or difficult season, don't do too much. Be careful what meaning you give things in the tough seasons of God. In the life of Joseph in the Book of Genesis, we see that the season of prosperity will always be preceded by pits and prison. Character is developed in the pits and prisons. God's plans don't change just because seasons do. God's plan for Joseph to be a great ruler never changed because he was put in the pit or in the prison. God is still with us whether we are in a pit, prison or a palace. During and after Covid-19.

Yet we survived this season and now moving on to the next season of life in Phase 2 and Phase 3 will come in time. There will always be crisis, diseases, war, famine, violence. Be patient, encourage one another consistently, no matter what the season. It may be a season of harvest, or a season of ploughing and sowing. Doing what is required now will enable you to benefit during the harvest season.

Be consistent! Do the work that the season you are in requires. Farmers do different work in different seasons. There are times for planting, resting, watering, harvesting. There is a lot of preparatory work required in order to reap a harvest. Now all our churches are doing a lot of preparatory work to reopen and for resumption of masses. Whatever state in life we are in, we all go through seasons. Work through the season you are in. *"The lazy person does not plough in season; harvest comes, and there is nothing to be found."* (Proverbs 20:4). We need to do the work that corresponds to the season.



### Learn from every season

Every season has lessons of life for us. In Joseph's life, the plan of God was for him to rule, but before he ruled he was ruled over. What we are learning now will help us be wiser when we next go through this season, or it will be useful

when we have a friend who goes through this season. We can learn things in our dark seasons that enable us to minister hope and stability to others who will face these kinds of things in the future. So don't despair if there are trials. God is with us in it, and will bring us through.



### Prepare for the Next Season

“Farmers who wait for perfect weather never plant. If they watch every cloud, they never harvest.” (Ecclesiastes 11:4) When things are tough, do what you know you need to do. You can have financial loss along the path of doing God’s will, but God can turn it around. Prepare for the time when the favourable winds will blow again. Don’t resign yourself to something. Have a sense of fight. Don’t allow the season to make you resign to whatever is happening.

**Like the Mysteries of the Rosary**, we experience the *Dry Season*, *Waiting Season*, *Busy Season*, *Testing Season*, *Spiritual Warfare Season*, *Joyful Season*.

What other seasons of life are you in right now? Can you identify? Can you ride the storm? Is Jesus in the boat with you?

### Keep the Right climate in your Heart no Matter what the Outside climate is

It’s only the water that’s on the inside of the boat that causes danger, not the water outside the boat. Even if there is conflict, trouble in the exterior, **GUARD YOUR HEART**. Our heart condition greatly influences the course and situations of our life. God crafts circumstances according to the lessons we need to learn. We can’t control what happens around us, but we can control what happens inside us. When we were hit by Covid-19, we can either fear and run or stand strong and fight. We can’t control how this will pan out, but we can control how we respond to the situations.

### God is at Work in Every Season

The Lord was with Joseph in Potiphar’s house. The Lord blessed him and favoured him. If you are a favoured one, you are favoured no matter where you are. There are seasons of fruitfulness and there are also seasons of hard labour. Farmers keep planting even if they lose a whole year’s work due to events in nature, like floods or droughts. We can be confident that God is working things out for our good no matter how things are going in our external world. God’s main purpose is to prepare and form us for eternity, to conform us to the image of Jesus Christ. When we understand that, we can understand that we are not going to have easy seasons all the time. Even the blessed man of Psalm 1 who meditates on the world bears fruit **“in its season”** (Psalm 1:1-3). Whether we see fruit in our current season or not, God is still at work, preparing something good for us. Praise the Lord!

### The Need for Perseverance

#### Wilma Rudolph Overcame Obstacles to Win Olympic Gold

Wilma Rudolph was the 20th of 22 children. Born prematurely, doctors did not expect Wilma to survive. She did, but at the age of four, she contracted double pneumonia and scarlet fever, leaving her left leg paralysed. She learned to walk with the aid of a metal brace. When Wilma was nine-years-old, she removed the leg brace and began walking without it.



By age 13, she developed a rhythmic walk. That same year, she decided to begin running. She entered her first race and came in last. For the next three years, Wilma came in dead last in every race she entered. But she kept on running, and one day she won.

Eventually, the little girl who was not supposed to live, and then who was not supposed to be able to walk, would win three gold medals in Rome's 1960 Olympic games.

That is why Paul spoke the words of 2 Timothy 4:7 as he sat in a Roman jail, knowing that he was soon to be martyred for the faith. You sense the incredible relief in his spirit as he says, ***“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.”*** It is not just about running the race, but finishing it well. Our focus is about finishing the race. So it is in the Christian life. God has gone before us. He knows our end from our beginning. He knows all the days of our life. In his great foreknowledge, He has gone ahead of us and planted these flags ahead of us. Run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

**If we're going to finish, we've got to keep running until we reach the finish line.**

Some of us have been knocked down. Perhaps we have made some foolish decisions. Perhaps other people have done us wrong. God's word to us is, *“Get up and run! Forget those who have wronged you. Forget what lies behind and run for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. You still have a race ahead of you.”* God says as much in Isaiah 46:34 *“Even to your old age, I am He, even when you turn grey I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save you.”* Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. He whispers again, as He says, *“Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord.”* (Psalm 27:14). The season for ripening will come.

We pray that one day, like the apostle Paul, we will be able to say those words, *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.”* (2 Timothy 4:7)



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