

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

The Seasons of Life

Seeking God in Summer, Fall, Winter, and Spring

In Eastern Washington where I grew up there are four very distinct seasons. Winters were bitter cold. Without the help of special heaters many car engines would freeze solid at night. With the arrival of spring came singing birds and rains that melted the last of winter's snow away. Trees began to leaf out and tulips could be seen pushing their way up through the warming soil. Summers began mildly enough but grew warmer and warmer until the 100 degree heat threatened to burn everything around. With fall came cool breezes, fresh vegetables from the garden, and a beautiful explosion of color from the flowers. As the night air grew crisp trees dropped their leaves in a brilliant display of crimson, yellow, orange, and brown.

On the farm where my grandfather lived his life there were specific jobs that had to be done in each of the seasons. During the fall of the year the hard red winter wheat was planted. It was important to plant at the right time so that the young seedlings would be well established before winter rains and snows arrived. Winter was when all the equipment got overhauled in preparation for the next year's work. Spring was when the soft white spring wheat was planted, weeds were plowed under, the crops were fertilized, and Grandpa would work on painting and rebuilding farm buildings. By early summer the harvester would emerge from the barn to be prepared for the work to come. It often took Grandpa a month to inspect every nut and bolt on that giant machine to make sure that nothing would break during the critical harvest period. As the wheat would begin to turn golden brown everyone knew that harvest was near. Every morning as the sun began to break over the horizon Grandpa would walk into the field, grab a head of wheat, rub it in his hands to remove the chaff, and then eat a kernel or two. "Not yet," he'd say, "maybe tomorrow." When the wheat was finally ripe enough harvest would begin in earnest. It was always a race to get the crop in; too many hot days could shrivel the wheat, a rainstorm could knock it down on the ground and make it mold

(Continued on page 2)

Words to Ponder 4
A selection of wise sayings

One Final Thought 5
Something to consider as you venture forth next week

Personal Application 6

The Seasons of Life

(Continued from page 1)

reducing a year's worth of work to ruin. It was a risky business but Grandpa was one of the best farmers around because he understood the reason for the seasons and did what was needed in each.

God has seasons for our lives as well. There are times when we greet the world with fresh ideas and enthusiasm, times when we struggle to see the fruits of our labor, there are times of waiting, and there are times of great harvest. As we enter a new millennium it seems fitting to consider what God has in store for us in the seasons of our lives. I used to think of life's seasons relating to age; youth, emerging adulthood, adult, and the retirement years. But after listening to a sermon by pastor Tom

Holladay of Saddleback Valley Community Church I changed my mind. Pastor Tom graciously allowed me to use his sermon outline for this issue of the Newsletter.

**When you are
faced with
storms in your
life you need to
seek the shelter
of God's love.
When you do,
God promises to
comfort and de-
liver you.**

A SEASON FOR EVERY ACTIVITY

On the left side of your Bible just past Psalms and Proverbs lies a small, but powerful book called Ecclesiastes. The author describes life as utterly meaningless, that all our striving for *things* is vanity apart from a relationship with God. It is here that God shows the importance of understanding the timing of the seasons of life. As you read the passage from Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 you may recognize phrases from several songs made popular in the 70's and 80's.

“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain, a time to search and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.”

(Continued on page 3)

Publishing Information

The Wheat & chaff Newsletter is published by Wheat & chaff. The Newsletter is designed to provide Biblical insights to relevant business issues for today's managers.

Editor: Ron R. Kelleher. Ron completed a 36-year career in sales and marketing management for a top Fortune 50 company, before retiring to spend

full-time in ministry to the business community.

Questions: If there is a specific question or subject you would like to see addressed in a future issue please email editor@wheat-chaff.org.

Quotations: Unless otherwise noted all Bible verses are from the NIV.

The Seasons of Life

(Continued from page 2)

The first verse tells us that God has a plan and a time for every activity in life. The list of examples in the subsequent verses shows there are times not only for physical activities like work, but there are also seasons for emotions like weeping, mourning, laughing, and dancing.

WINTER: THE SEASON OF STORMS



In every winter season I have lived through there have been storms. Sometimes the storms are small, coming and going in a day. Other times they stay for several days and their affects linger on as people dig out of the snow, repair the damage from a windstorm, or wait for rivers to recede from a flood. Regardless of the size of the storm, you can be sure in every winter season there will be storms. They tend to come upon you quickly without warning, and then, just as quickly they fade away.

In our lives, we will face many seasons of “storms.” God said to the nation Israel, “*call upon Me in the day of trouble and I will deliver you, and*

you will honor me.” (Psalm 50:15). In those days, people generally offered sacrifices to God for sin or to relieve their troubles, but here God tells them that he will deliver them if they will just call on Him and give Him the glory.

When you are faced with storms in your life you need to seek the shelter of God’s love. When you do, God promises to comfort and deliver you:

- “*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.*” (2 Cor. 1:3-4)
- “*The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles.*” (Psalm 34:17).

So the next time you find yourself in the middle of a storm call out to God in prayer, and know that he has promised not only to comfort you, but to deliver you.

SPRING: THE SEASON OF GROWTH



King David faced enemy armies along with the difficulties of running a country. He often turned to God for help. On one such occasion David wrote, “*He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God.*” (Psalm 40:2-3). When David had turned to God, God delivered him, gave him new confidence, and lifted his spirits.

For the farmer, spring is the time for planting and nurturing young seedlings. When you are in a spring season you need to plant seeds. It is a great time for making changes, building better relationships, focusing on new ministries, new businesses, or developing new habits.

Spring is a time of great energy. It is the best time to renew your perspective on life review God’s purpose for your life, and praise God for all He has done for you. Remember, “*So neither*

(Continued on page 4)

Seasons of Life

(Continued from page 3)

he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow." (I Cor. 3:7).

SUMMER: THE SEASON OF WAITING



After the seeds are in the ground there is little the farmer can do. He must wait for the crop to grow.

Things like wind and rain are beyond the farmer's control, he must wait until the crop is ready for harvest.

We have similar times in our lives. We may have planted the seed of a new ministry, or a new business, and now we

God's foundation is a Rock, who will never leave us or forsake us. Who better to turn to during the storms of our life?

must wait to see it grow. So many times God tells us to wait for Him, but it is difficult because we are so impatient:

- "Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him." (Psalm 37:7).

- "Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, 'Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.'" (Mark 6:31).
- "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." (Matthew 11:29).
- "For six days, work is to be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest." (Exodus 31:15)
- "You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near." (James 5:8).

I believe that sometimes the greatest test of our faith is when God wants us to wait. Remember, God answers all our prayers. Sometimes the answer is "yes," sometimes it is "no," and sometimes it is "not yet." It is those "not yet's" that challenge my faith. When I am faced with a "not yet" I try to remember Grandpa checking the wheat and saying, "Not yet, maybe tomorrow."

Words to Ponder

"Those who don't pick roses in summer won't pick them in winter either." German Proverb

"for behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtle-dove is heard in our land." Song of Songs 2:11-12 (ESV)

"then I will give you your rains in their season, and the land shall yield its increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit." Leviticus 26:4 (ESV)

"If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant: if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome." Ann Bradstreet

(Continued on page 5)

Seasons of Life

(Continued from page 4)

FALL: THE SEASON OF SUCCESS



The fall is the time for harvest; bringing in the crop that was so carefully planted and nurtured in the spring, and so fretfully worried over in the summer.

For us, fall is the time when we see our hard labor begin to pay-off; children become responsible adults, businesses prosper, and ministries flourish.

It is in our seasons of success that we must be careful to

stay close to God. It is the time when we think we can do anything, a time when we think we are solely responsible for the harvest. It is the time that we forget that we depend on God for every breath we take.

“Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.” (John 15:4).

Paul wrote to Timothy, *“The hard-working farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops.”* (II Timothy 2:6). When it is harvest time in your life you need to celebrate the success God has brought to you, share some with others, and save some for the future.

Grandpa used to slaughter a steer and divide it; a portion for he and Grandma, a portion he shared with his children’s families, and a portion he might sell to buy another steer,

Grandma used to do the same thing with her chicken eggs. She’d keep some for her and Grandpa, give some to their children’s families, and sell the rest to neighbors. Grandma’s “egg money” was saved for a rainy day or special treats.

Celebrate, share, and save. Its a good formula for business: thank God for the success He has brought, share your success with others, and save for the future.

One Final Thought

God gives us seasons to build our trust in Him and to develop us into better people. During winter storms we need to turn to Him for deliverance; in the spring we need to be renewed in mind, body and spirit; in the summer we need to trust in God, rest, and wait upon Him; and in the fall we need to celebrate our success, share our bountiful harvest, and save for the future.

No matter what season you may be in now, know that God stands beside you, ready to comfort and deliver you if you will just trust in Him. Isaiah, referring to God, wrote, *“He will be the sure foundation for your times, a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge.”* (Isaiah 33:6). God’s foundation is a Rock, who will never leave us or forsake us. Who better to

turn to during the storms of our life? Who better to look to for comfort and deliverance? Who better to build a solid foundation for our lives? Who better to trust and provide rest? Who better to share our love? The answer is simple. There is no one better!

Wheat & chaff

Biblical Insights for
Today's Managers

Primary Business Address:

23372 Via Chiripa
Mission Viejo, CA 92691-2216

Phone: 949.472.0107

Fax: 949.472.0820

E-mail: editor@wheat-chaff.org

We're on the web:

Wheat-chaff.org

Wheat & chaff

Newsletter

BIBLICAL INSIGHTS FOR TODAY'S MANAGERS

Personal Application:

Where are you in the seasons of life?

Take a few hours when you can get away by yourself; just you and God, and maybe a tablet and pencil. Pick a quiet place where you can be with God undisturbed.

Begin in prayer. Where are you in the seasons of life? Think about your different roles: wife, husband, mother, father, child, friend, employee, employer, etc. Your season of life may be different by role: you may be enjoying harvest in your career, but suffering through a storm in your marriage.

Prayerfully consider your journey in each of these roles. Try to identify each of the seasons in your past and where you are right now. God has things to teach us in each season. What have you learned in this season? What do you think you still need to learn?

Complete this exercise every six months if you can, but definitely every year. Being aware of your season, what God has for you, and what He wants you to learn will help you stay in the center of His will for your life.

