



THE NIGHT SEASONS OF LIFE Sunday June 26, 2005

Seasons of Life

We go through various seasons of life. Seasons change.

This is the way God has designed life.

Ecclesiastes 3:1

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

In fact, this is the way God works.

Ecclesiastes 3:11

He hath made every thing beautiful in his time:

Acts 1:6,7

6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times (*chronos*) or the seasons (*kairos*), which the Father hath put in his own power.

chronos = duration or calendar time

kairos = the right time, opportune moment, the set time

Galatians 4:4

But when the fullness (*completion*) of the time (*chronos*) was come, God sent forth his Son,

After the completion of the *chronos* comes the *kairos*.

It is God who changes times and seasons in the affairs of man on the earth.

Daniel 2:21 And he changeth the times (*periods*) and the seasons (*appointed occasion*):

As believers, we are assured that the times and seasons of our lives are in His hands.

Psalms 31:15 My times (*now, when*) are in thy hand:

The times and seasons of our lives – the “nows” and “whens” of our life - are in God’s hands. God leads us through various seasons of life and He orchestrates their changes as He sees fit.

It takes wisdom to know and understand the seasons of life, be sensitive to their changes and respond appropriately.

Ecclesiastes 8:5,6

.....a wise man’s heart discerneth both time (*now, when*) and judgment. Because to every purpose there is time and judgment,....

1 Chronicles 12:32

And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their commandment

There is something specific that must be done in each season of life.

Every season has a reason, specific things that must be accomplished.

The Night Seasons

Among the different seasons of life that we go through, there is one kind of season that we can refer to as the “night seasons” of life.



Here are some things that characterize the Night Seasons:

- Darkness : Can't see ahead. Future seems bleak, hopeless.
- Stillness : Everything seem quite, motionless and still. Nothing seems to be happening. Long delays.
- Loneliness : No one seems to understand. No one seems to care. Even God seems to be a million miles away.
- Inner Turmoil : A lot of questioning, searching, seeking.
- Obscurity : You are hidden away. (e.g. like Moses in the backside of the desert, or like John the Baptist eating locusts and honey in the wilderness, or like Paul who spent about 13+ Silent years)

Some seasons tend to repeat themselves. So we may go through the Night Seasons many times in life.

Whence Cometh The Night?

When and How Does The Night Come? How do we get into a night season?

- The Lord directs our way into such seasons
- We stumble in as a result of our own foolishness/mistakes/wrong choices
- The actions of others force us into those situations
- The devil comes against us with all intensity

The Lord directs our way into such seasons

e.g. John the Baptist (Luke 1:76-80),

e.g. Paul the apostle (Galatians 1:15 – 2:1)

The Silent Years of Paul's life [Jerusalem à Damascus, converted on the way. Damascus à Arabia à Damascus (3 yrs). à Jerusalem (Acts 9) à (runs for life) to Syria, Cilicia, Tarsus à (After 13 yrs) Barnabas brings Paul to Antioch (Acts 11, spends 1 year) à goes to Jerusalem (Act 11:30)]

We stumble in as a result of our own actions/decisions/choices

e.g. Moses (Acts 7:20-30)

e.g. The people of Israel in the wilderness (Numbers 14)

When we make decisions that take us in a direction that was not part of God's original plan – the Lord in His mercy continues to be with us, provide for us, teach us and lead us as we listen to Him – and He directs us back into the original plan and purpose.

The actions of others force us into such situations

e.g. Joseph – his brother sold him into Egypt (Genesis 37)

e.g. David – had to run from Saul who became jealous of him (1 Samuel 22)

The devil comes against us with all intensity

e.g. Job

e.g. The evil day Ephesians 6:13 Luke 4:13 (until a *kairos* time)

(As we read the Book of Job, we know that it was not the Lord taking away – it was the devil who did the taking away. But at that point in time, Job did not have the spiritual understanding to know what was really happening in the spirit realm. That's why he made the statement "The Lord gives and the Lord takes away" (Job 1:21,22). Job spoke out of ignorance and hence did not accuse God foolishly. There have been times when God overlooked ignorance (Acts 17:30). The only time the Lord takes away is when we walk in willful sin and rebellion (e.g. king Saul, 1 Samuel 15:22-28). The good thing about Job is that he did not allow his heart to become bitter towards God. And what we do see is that in the end the Lord GAVE Job twice as much as he had!)

Why The Night?

Why does God allow the Night Seasons of life?



(Personal testimony)

1. A time of teaching & training

Many of life's lessons, spiritual insights are gained in the night seasons of life.

Matthew 10:27

What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.

Psalms 16:7

I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel: my reins *heart, inner being*) also instruct me in the night seasons.

Job 35:10

But none saith, Where is God my Maker, Who giveth songs in the night,

2. A time for character development, Refining, Maturing

Psalms 17:3

Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing; I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.

Job 23:10

But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

Romans 5:3,4

Tribulation produces endurance, and endurance produces proven character.

Our negatives are turned into positives in the dark seasons of life.

3. A time to build strength

David killing the lion and the bear while tending sheep (1 Samuel 17:34-37)

The only way you become a mighty warrior is to fight some battles.

There is no victory without a battle, no strength without a struggle, no testimony without a test.

4. A time to lay the foundation

The seed germinates while in the ground. There are things happening, although we do not see it.

Zechariah 4:10

"Who hath despised the day of small things...."

In God's kingdom...great things usually have small beginnings. (Mark 4:30-32)

5. A time to wise up

Time to learn from mistakes and make changes.

Where is God When All is Dark?

Psalms 121:4

Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

Psalms 74:16

The day is thine, the night also is thine:



Daniel 2:22

He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.

Psalms 46:1,2

1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

2 Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

Romans 8:35

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

God is still faithful. He still guides, directs and provides.

What Do I Do in the Middle of the Night?

1. Keep your heart devoted to the Lord

Job 13:15

Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him:

2. Keep His praises on your lips

Habakkuk 3:17,18

17 Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls:

18 Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

Psalms 34:1

I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

3. Live what you have learnt

The acid test of who you really are, what you firmly believe, what you are really made of – is seen, not in the nice and easy seasons, but in the difficult and tough seasons of life.

It is the fire that tests and proves what you are really made of.

- This is the time to hold fast to your faith and confession.
Hebrews 10:23
- Fight the good fight of faith 1 Timothy 6:12
- Guard your heart. Keep your heart free from ill-feeling, discouragement, etc.
e.g. Joseph

Genesis 50:19,20

19 And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God?

20 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

Proverbs 4:22

- Develop endurance

Psalms 40:1-3



1 I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.
2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.
3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.

James 5:10,11

10 Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.

11 Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

Hebrews 12:2

"...who for the joy set before Him, endured the cross...."

4. You will not always have all the answers.

There are times when we need to stop asking "why" and just get on with God's plan!

Deuteronomy 29:29

The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

Don't let an unanswered question bring your life to a screeching halt. Get on with it! You will have your answers when you get to heaven. For now, just run your race to completion!!

5. Stay faithful to the call of God. Keep working.

1 Corinthians 15:58

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

2 Timothy 4:2

Don't be a "Yo-Yo" Christian, sometimes up and sometimes down. The fruit of the Spirit is "temperance" or "self-control" – the ability to be consistent, regardless of circumstances or situations!

6. Learn the lessons. Make needed changes. Wise up.

There are specific lessons to be learned, specific changes that need to be made in our character, conduct and the way we order our selves. Until we learn these and make the changes – until we come to the maturity and stage of ripening – our season will not change.

When Will My Morning Dawn?

What can I do to step into the day?

God is not in a hurry. God's perception of time is much different from ours.

2 Peter 3:8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

Psalms 90:4 For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.

God will wait until you make the necessary changes.



Isaiah 58:6-11

6 Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

7 Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

8 Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy reward.

9 Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;

10 And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday:

11 And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

When we remain stubborn and unwilling to make the necessary changes in our lives, the night season gets longer and delays the breaking forth of the morning.

The way you entered will determine the way you exit.

- If God brought you in, God will bring you out.
- If you stepped in because of your own foolishness, then learn your lesson. Reverse your foolishness.
- If people pushed you in, God will use people to pull you out!
- If the enemy has come against you with intensity, the same enemy will run from you.

We have this wonderful hope that the Night will give way to the morning!

Genesis 41:51,52

51 And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: For God, said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house.

52 And the name of the second called he Ephraim: For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.

God can cause you to forget the grief, pain and sorrow of the night. He can cause you to be fruitful in the very place that you once were afflicted!

Psalm 30:5

For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

Psalm 30:11,12

11 Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness;

12 To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.

Psalm 102:13

Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favor her, yea the set time, is come.



USEFUL RESOURCES



Watch our online Sunday Church service live stream every Sunday at 10:30am (Indian Time, GMT+5:30). Spirit filled, anointed worship, Word and ministry for healing, miracles, and deliverance.

YOUTUBE: <https://youtube.com/allpeopleschurchbangalore>

WEBSITE: <https://apcwo.org/live>

Our other websites and free resources:

CHURCH: <https://apcwo.org>

FREE SERMONS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/sermons>

FREE BOOKS: <https://apcwo.org/books/english>

DAILY DEVOTIONALS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/daily-devotional>

JESUS CHRIST: <https://examiningjesus.com>

BIBLE COLLEGE: <https://apcbiblecollege.org>

E-LEARNING: <https://apcbiblecollege.org/elearn>

WEEKEND SCHOOLS: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/weekend-schools>

COUNSELING: <https://chrysalislife.org>

MUSIC: <https://apcmusic.org>

MINISTERS FELLOWSHIP: <https://pamfi.org>

CHURCH APP: <https://apcwo.org/app>

CHURCHES: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/churches>

WORLD MISSIONS: <https://apcworldmissions.org>