

The Scriptural Metaphor of the Seasons of Life

Often after the JOY of the autumn Feast of Tabernacles ... many will have a “let down” as the *Holy convocations* are done ... life is “back to normal” ... & we face the prospects of a long, cold, winter ...

... before we **start** to look forward to the “hope & newness” (new life) of spring

The scriptural concept of "seasons of life" is a metaphorical representation (“This is like That”) of the various phases & stages that individuals experience throughout their journey. Much like the changing seasons in nature, life unfolds in a series of distinct chapters, each marked by its own unique qualities, challenges, & opportunities. This metaphor (comparison) provides a framework for understanding the ebb & flow of existence, with each season offering its own set of lessons & insights.

Spring, the season of new beginnings, corresponds to early childhood & youth. In the church we use terms like:

- “**first love**”
 - **Mar_12:30** & YOU SHALL **LOVE** THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, WITH ALL YOUR MIND, & WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.' This is the **first** commandment.
 - **1Jn_4:19** We **love** Him because He **first** loved us.
 - **Rev_2:4** Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your **first love**.



or

- “**new Truth**”. (It can happen at ANY age!)
 - **Mat 13:52** Then He said to them, "Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things **new** & old."
 - **Prov 4:7-8** NIV The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding. Cherish her, & she will exalt you; embrace her, & she will honor you.
 - **Psa 25:4-5** Show me Your ways, O LORD; Teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your **truth** & teach me, For You are the God of my salvation...

It's a time of growth, exploration, & discovery. Just as flowers bloom in spring, individuals in this season of life are full of potential & optimism. They embark on the journey of self-discovery, education, & forming the foundations of their values & beliefs.

Summer, the season of abundance & vitality, represents the prime of life during adulthood. Much like the warm, fruitful months, this season is characterized by productivity, achievement, & the enjoyment of life's rewards. It's a time for building careers, starting families, & reaping the benefits of one's hard work.

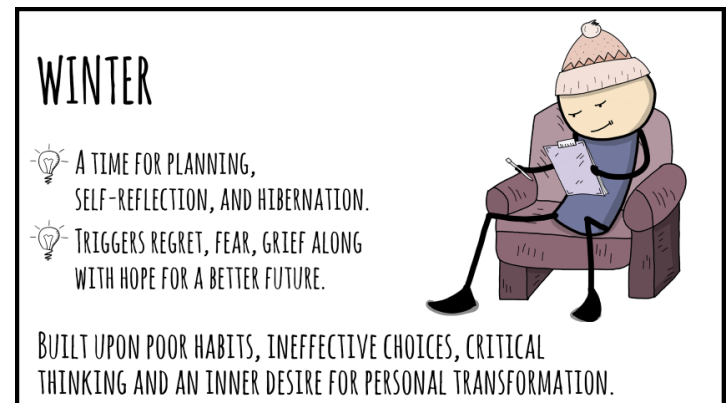
- **Prov 12:11** (NIV): "Those who work their land will have an abundant food, but those who chase fantasies have no sense."
- **Eccl 5:18** (NIV): "This is what I have observed to be good: that it is appropriate for a person to eat, to drink & to find satisfaction in their toilsome labor under the sun during the few days of life God has given them—for this is their lot."

Autumn, the season of transition & reflection, mirrors middle & late adulthood. This season is marked by maturity, as individuals transition from their bustling summers to a more reflective period. It's a time for harvesting the wisdom & experiences of life, & for contemplating one's legacy & the impact they've had on others.

- **Ecc 7:13-15** NLT Accept the way God does things, for who can straighten what He has made crooked? Enjoy prosperity while you can, but when hard times strike, realize that both come from God. Remember that nothing is certain in this life. I have seen everything in this meaningless life, including the death of good young people & the long life of wicked people.

- **Philippians 3:13-14** (NIV): "Brothers & sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind & straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."

Another view??



Winter, the season of introspection & rest, symbolizes old age & the end of one's life journey. Just as nature rests & rejuvenates during this season, individuals in their winter years often take time to reflect on their life, seek wisdom, focus on spiritual matters, & prepare for the eventual "final transition" (end of this life).

- **Psalms 90:12** (NIV): "Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."

- **Ecclesiastes 12:1** (NIV): "Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come & the years approach when you will say, 'I find no pleasure in them.'"

- **2 Timothy 4:7-8** (NIV): "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing."

- **Psalms 39:4-5** (NIV): "Show me, Lord, my life's end & the number of my days; let me know how fleeting my life is. You have made my days a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is as nothing before you. Everyone is but a breath, even those who seem secure."

- **Job 12:12** "Is not wisdom found among the aged? Does not long life bring understanding?"

- **Ecclesiastes 3:20** (NIV): "All go to the same place; all come from dust, & to dust all return."

- **Psalms 71:9** (NIV): "Do not cast me away when I am old; do not forsake me when my strength is gone."

- **Isaiah 46:4** (NIV): "Even to your old age & gray hairs I am He, I am He who will sustain you. I have made you, & I will carry you; I will sustain you & I will rescue you."

Just as the changing *seasons in nature* are cyclical & interconnected, so too are the seasons of life. We are encouraged to embrace our current season, while holding onto the hope of a new spring to come.

A Different Approach to “the Seasons”...

1. The Seasons of Testing & Growth: The Bible often speaks about the trials & tribulations that individuals face during their journey. These difficult seasons are seen as opportunities for growth & spiritual refinement.

James 1:2-4 "Consider it pure joy, my brothers & sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance."

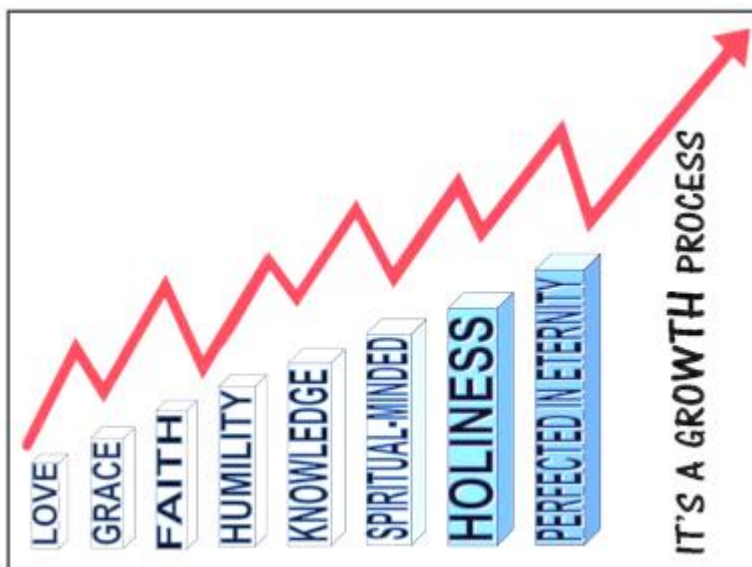
2. The Seasons of Waiting: Many biblical figures experienced seasons of waiting & preparation before they fulfilled their purposes. For example, David spent years in the wilderness before becoming king. These seasons of waiting are seen as times of trust & dependence on God's timing.

Psalm 27:14 "Wait for the Lord; be strong & take heart & wait for the Lord."

3. The Seasons of Harvest: Scripture highlights the importance of reaping what one sows.

Gal 6:7-9 "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."



4. The Seasons of Renewal &

Restoration: God's word speaks of seasons of restoration & renewal when ... God brings healing & blessings.

Psalm 23:3 "He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake."

5. The Season of Grace: The central message of the Bible is the season of grace & salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.
Ephesians 2:8-9 "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

6. Seasons of Repentance & Forgiveness: The scripture encourages individuals to acknowledge their mistakes & seek forgiveness, illustrating that **every season** is an opportunity for repentance & renewal.

1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, He is faithful & just & will forgive us our sins & purify us from all unrighteousness."

7. Seasons of Transition & Change: The Bible acknowledges that life involves transitions & change, whether it's a change of circumstances, roles, or relationships.

Prov 16:9 says, "In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps."

8. Seasons of Comfort & Consolation: During times of grief & sorrow, the Bible (& our GREAT God!) offers solace & assurance.

Psalms 34:18 "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted & saves those who are crushed in spirit."

9. Seasons of Service & Sacrifice: Scripture teaches that serving others & making sacrifices for the well-being of others is a noble endeavor.

Mar 10:43-45 ... **whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. & whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, & to give His life a ransom for many."**

(a GREAT example!)

10. Seasons of Endurance & Perseverance: The Bible underscores the importance of enduring challenges & persevering through trials.

James 1:12 "Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love Him."

11. Seasons of Reflection & Self-Examination: The Bible encourages self-reflection & introspection to align one's life with God's will.

Psalms 139:23-24 "Search me, God, & know my heart; test me & know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, & lead me in the way everlasting."

Acts 7:59-60 & they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God & saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then he knelt down & cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." & when he had said this, he fell asleep.



12. Seasons of Bearing Fruit: The Bible encourages believers to bear spiritual fruit & impact others positively during their lifetime.

Gal 5:22-23 describes the "fruit of the Spirit" as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, & self-control.

Sorry folks! The approaching winter is NOT our time to "let down" ... fold our hands & sleep!

Joh 4:35 Do you not say, 'There are still four months & then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes & **look at the fields**, for they are already white for harvest!

God calls us NOW... not just to "save us" ... but to "**SPEND us**" in the work of the church ... The Gospel of the Kingdom of God!... **Matt 28:19 ... Go! Ye therefore into ALL the world!**

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1 Biblical Truth

- Bible
- Scriptures
- Revelation
- Inspiration

5 Witness to Others

- Outreach to Family
- Outreach to Friends
- Testify (before & after Christ)
- Holy Spirit lead
- "Plant", "Water", God increases



2 Quiet Time

- 5 to 30 min/day
- 1 on 1 time w/the Lord
- Controlled environment
- Coveted time (reserved)
- Daily diet; habitual

4 Faithful Service

- Others centered
- Proactively volunteer
- Give sacrificially
- Enjoy faithful fellowship
- Desire to please God

3 Reflect/Meditate

- Read it!
- Say it!
- Write it!
- Ask questions!
- Seek answers!

Spiritual Growth

1 Peter 2:2 ■ 2 Peter 3:18

TO GROW SPIRITUALLY, ONE SHOULD . . .

- Study the Word of God ————— 2 Timothy 2:15
- Grow in the knowledge of God's Word — 2 Peter 3:18
- Receive the word with meekness ——— James 1:21-25
- Be instructed in righteousness ——— 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- Add the Christian graces ————— 2 Peter 1:5-8
- Work for the Savior ————— Titus 2:7
- Pray for wisdom ————— James 1:5-6
- Attend services regularly ————— Hebrews 10:25
- Worship in Spirit and in truth ——— John 4:23-24
- Tell others about Christ ————— 2 Timothy 2:2



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| • Hebrews 5:12-14 | • Galatians 4:19 |
| • 1 Corinthians 14:20 | • 1 Peter 2:1-3 |
| • 1 Corinthians 16:13 | • 2 Peter 3:18 |
| • Matthew 5:48 | • Ephesians 2:19-22 |
| • Hebrews 6:1-2 | • 1 Corinthians 15:58 |
| • Ephesians 4:11-15 | • James 4:8 |



"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby." 2 Peter 2:2

7 Principles for Spiritual Growth

Stop & Consider

- "What am I feeling?"

Recognize Your Spiritual Battle

- How is Satan tempting you?

Tell the Truth

- Tell yourself, tell God, and tell a trusted friend

Look for a Lie

- What do you believe?

Ask, Seek & Knock

- Ask God for insight, wisdom and truth

Find Peace in Forgiveness

- Accept God's forgiveness and forgive others

Own Your Rescue Story

- Live in the truth

Hindrances to Spiritual Growth

