

As Seasons Change, Enjoy Where God Has You

I love the changing seasons. In central Florida, where I live, we don't experience seasonal weather changes as much as our friends in other parts of the country, but we do enjoy the change in focus and the cooler weather fall and winter bring. We may not have snow, but we can enjoy lighted snowmen on the porch during the holidays!

Years ago when I taught school, I would change the decor of my home as often as I changed the one in my classroom—out with one season and in with another. I'd get rid of the old so we could embrace the new. Being a creature of habit, I still like to change my surroundings about every three months.

The Bible says there is a season for everything in life (see Eccl. 3:1-8). If only we could embrace the seasons of our lives as willingly as we embrace the seasons of the year. It's been said that the only thing that is constant is change; but unfortunately that's what we tend to resist—especially if it means going outside our comfort zones.

God has planned the seasons of our lives with infinite wisdom. He has ordained each one, knowing exactly what fruit is to be harvested during each time frame. I believe that since His desire is to do us only good, He enjoys each season He plans for us (see Jer. 29:11). So why are we so prone to resist the season we're in?

It's as if we are never satisfied. When it's summer, we want fall. When it's winter, we want summer.

When we are single, we want to be married. When we are married, we want children, and when we have children, we want them to be grown and out of the house. When the nest is finally empty, we miss them and want them back—at least for a

little while.

Yet we tend to criticize the children of Israel, who sinned against God for their continued murmuring and complaining. Like spoiled children in the natural, they continually demanded more. God brought them out of 400 years of slavery, gave them rest from their enemies, and provided daily food, water and protection.

But no matter what He did, it wasn't enough. It seems that what they really wanted was control of their own destiny and circumstances, not total dependence on an invisible God whose plans were for their good (see Jer. 29:11). As a result, an entire generation perished before receiving their promised inheritance.

The wilderness journey was not a picnic. It was an adventure into the unknown, and it was a change of season for an entire nation. But the Lord knew the way through that wilderness, just as He knows the way through ours. He ushers in the seasons in our lives and walks us through them. All He desires is that we embrace what He is doing in our lives with faith and gratitude (see 1 Thess. 5:18).

God is always working, even in seasons when we don't see much activity. During the season of planting, when there is no harvest, God is watering, nurturing, fertilizing and containing us so that in due season we can bring forth the fruit of righteousness He desires.

After a season of harvest, He often initiates a time of pruning (see John 15:1-2). Painful though this may be, it is necessary for us to produce even more fruit. We can trust God to do whatever He needs to do in our lives today because of His proven faithfulness yesterday (see Lam. 3:22-23).

During this season of thanksgiving, let's determine to count our blessings and enjoy, as He does, the season He has us in. Every day is a gift, and we should savor all the sights,

sounds, smells, friendships, fellowship, family, food and fun of the season. Let's also be thankful that God, in His infinite wisdom, planned our lives and leads us through many fruitful seasons. Instead of wishing we were in a different one, let's embrace and enjoy the one we are in right now (see Gal. 6:9).

PRAYER POWER FOR THE WEEK OF 11/11/2013

This week, as you enjoy this season, embrace an attitude of gratitude in every area of your life. When you pray for family, friends, and country, remember Israel and those persecuted for His Name's sake. Pray for those less fortunate who have been victimized by natural disasters, crime, terrorism, war and financial crises. Ask the Lord to show you what you can do to be a blessing and help those in need of comfort and provision. Continue to pray for wisdom and protection for our president and other government leaders. Ask God to ignite revival in our churches and send more laborers into His harvest fields here and abroad. Thes. 5:18; I Tim 2:1-8; Gal. 6:9.