

How to Stay Steady During Life's Whirlwinds

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens ... I have seen the burden God has laid on men. He has made everything beautiful in its time" (Ecc. 3:1,10-11, NIV).

Living in Michigan I've come to understand that seasons are inevitable. Whether I like it or not, one day the wind will shift and the temperature will drop and a new season will blow in and overtake the old. Knowing these seasonal changes are a fact of life, I've learned to prepare—to adjust and adapt with each turning season. I've also learned that while seasons are certain, they are *not* final.

As it is in nature, so it is in life. Life is filled with various seasons. More than a stagnant succession of sameness, life is an ever-changing, ever-moving journey.

Some of life's seasons are enjoyable, anticipated, even relished. Others are not. Some seasons are planned for, long awaited and dreamed of. And still, some seasons come abruptly and unexpectedly. They can be painful and difficult, dry and tiresome.

Ecclesiastes 3 reminds us that there are times and seasons of every kind—seasons of life and death, work and rest, wounding and healing, tearing down and building up, sorrow and joy, hatred and love, sickness and health, warfare and peace, plenty and want, and frustration and fulfillment.

Whatever season of life we are in, however—whatever we must endure—there's a promise from God, a promise of beauty. For God's Word says, "He has made everything beautiful in its time." But what do we do until beauty comes? How do we endure painful and difficult seasons? By approaching each season with

the following attitudes, while trusting in the promise of Romans 8:28, “all things God works for the good of those who love him,” we can do more than survive in life’s arduous seasons. We can thrive.

Here’s what to do in life’s seasons:

Delight in God (see Psalm 1:13). If we want to bear good fruit in our life regardless of what climate we’re in, we must stay faithful to God. In difficult seasons or seasons of waiting, we’re often tempted to take matters into our own hands and stray from the teachings of Jesus. In those trying, and often-confusing times, however, if we cling by faith to the Word of God and stand, trusting Him in all things, we will see certain victory. The Lord is faithful and He will not fail us.

Learn Contentment’s Secret. What’s your attitude about the season you are in? Sometimes our seasons of trial do not change until our attitude does. Bible teacher and author Charles Swindoll, says, “I am convinced that life is 10 percent what happens to me and 90 percent how I react to it ... and so it is with you; we are in charge of our attitudes.”

Our attitude makes all the difference. In fact, we can determine the course of our life based on how we navigate our attitudes. When our focus is positive and God-centered—trusting and praising Him, while refusing the spirit of despair—we will overcome.

Endure with joy (see Hebrews 12:1). In demanding and stressful seasons, don’t give up. We must press on and endure as soldiers of Jesus Christ. Endurance is the ability to keep pressing on, without growing weary. It’s stamina, forbearance, courage, fortitude, durability and ability to stand. But biblical endurance is more than just being the last man to stand. It is derived from the Greek word *hupomone*, which means “cheerful endurance,” or “hopeful waiting.”

Biblical Endurance speaks to our disposition in waiting as

much as it does to the ability to wait. It's more than just making it across the finish line. It's the outlook we maintain while we run the race. In other words, we have to endure with joy to claim victory in tough seasons.

Live in Eager Expectation (see Philippians 1:18b-22). Paul basically said, "I live in eager expectation and hope." Eager expectation is a powerful attitude that believes that God not only can change our circumstances, but He will. It's a mindset filled with compelling confidence, trust, expectation, optimism and assurance in Christ. Confident expectations won't allow us to give up our dream, or turn loose of our hope, but instead calls us to a deeper level of faith.

If we endeavor to cultivate these powerful mindsets in each season of life, I believe we will discover that we've not only *somehow* made it through tough times, but we have *victoriously* made it through our season of trial, and we are stronger for it.

Whatever you are facing today, remember your promise of beauty. God is working on your behalf and He will not fail you!

PRAYER POWER FOR THE WEEK OF 9/9/13

This week ask the Lord to help you keep your eye on His promises when you navigate the difficult seasons in your life. Thank Him that His Word will help you do more than survive, but will enable you to delight in Him, live in eager expectation and endure with joy throughout your circumstance. Spend time praising Him for His faithfulness. Continue to pray for unity in prayer and purpose among believers, for revival fires to flood our churches and spread throughout the nation, and for a worldwide harvest. Pray that our leaders would seek the Lord in prayer for wisdom and guidance regarding crucial decisions affecting our nation and the world. Remember Israel and those persecuted for the Lord's sake. Rom. 8:28; Ps. 1:13;

Heb. 12:1; Phil. 1:18-22; Ecc. 3:1, 10-11