

Prophetically Discerning Your Times and Seasons

I had never stepped into a church like it before. The **worship** ushered in the presence of God in a way I had never experienced. And I knew I was home.

Within seconds, the **Holy Spirit** told me it was a “safe place for this season.” I rejoiced in knowing it was a safe place after following Him out of a spiritually abusive church. But my heart simultaneously sank when He said it was “for this season.” From the moment I walked in, I never wanted to leave that place.

See, to everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven (Ecc. 3:1). I had entered into a season of refreshing and restoration after escaping a congregation where control and manipulation held many in bondage. The **Holy Spirit** needed to heal me where pastors had worked to shame me. And I needed rest for my weary soul that had been pushed to perform beyond the grace of God.

When the Holy Spirit’s work was done, though, that season was over and He sent me out to do a work for Him in a new vineyard. The Lord had to almost physically push me out of the door to get me to go when the season was over because I didn’t want to leave! Let’s just say I didn’t transition gracefully. I resisted the next movement of God in my life. God had to make it so uncomfortable for me to stay that I had no choice but to leave.

Don’t Fear Change

That’s often the case when we are transitioning into new seasons. And it makes the move a more trying, confusing experience than it needs to be. Typically, it’s not rebellion that keeps us from transitioning to the new place God wants to

take us. It's often just ignorance, immaturity or fear of change. But failing to move in God's timing can bring unwanted consequences, such as strained relationships, financial loss and stress. We need to **prophetically discern** the times and seasons we're in and move with the **Holy Spirit**.

In Ecclesiastes 3, the Preacher said there is a time to break down and a time to build up. Are you breaking down what God is trying to build in your life by refusing to let go of what lies behind and press on to what lies ahead? The Preacher said there is a time to gain and a time to lose. Are you trying to hold on to something God wants you to give up? Likewise, the Preacher said there is a time to keep and a time to throw away.

Do you see a running theme here? We can't hold on to something that God wants us to let go of and move into the next season of blessings He has ordained for us.

Sometimes letting go means willingly, at God's direction, giving up friends who have been negative influences in your life. I've had this happen more than a few times. The **Holy Spirit** led me to leave Florida and everyone I knew 11 years ago in order to flush all the poisonous relationships out of my life. I had a **supernatural boldness** to leave but once I got there, I didn't transition well.

Just Surrender

You might call it my **wilderness experience**. I remember sitting on a curb in a tiny Alabama town three days after arriving and crying my eyes out because I didn't know a single soul. I was there for 13 months and I resisted the transition for 12 of those months.

It's no coincidence that the Lord sent me back to South Florida one month after I told Him, "I don't like it here, but if you want me to stay here the rest of my life I will." Once I surrendered, He knew I was ready to go back and fight the

proverbial lions, tigers and bears in South Florida again. I was looking out my window to the Atlantic Ocean within weeks.

Sometimes letting go means giving up your rights and allowing God to be your vindicator. God has vindicated me time and time again when I refused to retaliate against my (Christian) enemies.

I've endured emotional terrorism at the hands of church leaders who said they loved me. I refused to return evil for evil, and God promoted me. I've been robbed by Christian contractors more than once and had opportunities to prosecute but, led by the Holy Spirit, I refused to defend myself. God returned everything I lost and more. I could go on and on about the vindication of God in my life. But I had to learn to surrender, and sometimes it was a struggle.

Discerning Times and Seasons

It isn't always easy to transition from one season to another even in the best of circumstances. Even great blessings can bring difficult transitions. The key to transitioning well is to first **discern the change in season**.

When you notice things beginning to rumble in your life, ask the **Holy Spirit** what is going on. Think back to the prayers you've released in recent weeks, months and years. Dig out **prophetic words** that have been spoken over your life. And stay prayerful. This will help you distinguish between the work of the enemy and the work of the Holy Spirit in your life, which isn't always obvious—especially in the face of loss.

Once you've discerned that the Lord is ushering you into a new season, quickly get into agreement with Him. The Bible says, "(How) can two walk together, unless they are agreed?" (Amos 3:3). Surrender your will to the Lord's will and be sensitive to the leading of the **Holy Spirit**. When you do, you'll find peace and joy even in the midst of the most difficult transitions. When we resist the will of the Lord we find

ourselves without the grace we need to rise to the occasion He is calling us to. He gives grace to the humble and He gives us the grace to be humble.

So no matter what season you are in now—and no matter what season the Lord has for you next—be encouraged. The Lord would say to you, “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you ... thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope” (Jeremiah 29:11). Seasons may change. Winds may blow. But God is the God of all seasons. Amen.

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