

Seasons

“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.” (Ecclesiastes 3:1 NIV)

One can see God’s created order in the seasons and cycles of nature. After three summers in the hot climate in the California interior, I am figuring out the change of seasons, and that the times for planting and watering the rose bushes are very different from the North. Genesis 8:22 speaks of a natural order in God’s creation: “As long as the earth endures, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.”

Corporations, schools, and churches start a new season with the start of a new fiscal year. For me, the start of a new academic year is a new season, and it reminds me of the grace of God. It is a fresh start; a new beginning. There are also seasons in our life, and the seasons of life are many. In the context of Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, some of these seasons mentioned are not in our control. They are God’s seasons, not our seasons. We do not, for example, have control of when we are born and when we die.

As Christians, there are seasons of growth in our relationship with Jesus Christ. These seasons often seem to come during times of stress or adversity. Even the well-known Psalm 23 seems to follow a sequence of seasons. The seasons of lacking nothing, green pastures, quiet waters, and right paths are followed by a season of walking in the dark valley. Then comes the seasons of the Lord’s comfort, the overflowing cup, and the promise of dwelling forever with the Lord!

The difficult thing about the seasons of life is that we know they are coming, but we do not always know when they are coming. Waiting for an answer to a

prayer is a season of life, and waiting is a difficult thing to do. The seasons of life can be **perplexing**. I have asked these questions, and I am certain that many others have also: “God, why is this happening?” “Why me?” “Why now?” Sometimes we can look back on a season and see God’s purpose, but sometimes seasons and events just don’t seem to make sense.

The seasons of life can be **purposeful**. The life of a Christian is not a series of random events that have no interconnection, no meaning, and no purpose. Romans 8:28 refers to all things working for good. It does not say that difficult seasons of life are good, but it says that God causes it to work for good for those who love Him. The seasons of life are not always as clear as spring, summer, fall, and winter. Even in the longer passage in Ecclesiastes, it is not all pleasure or all pain. It is a combination, and not all are equally measured.

The seasons of life can be **productive**. We may not see fruit in our labor at the present. Even in the daily tending of my rose bushes, I do not notice the growth from day-to-day, but in the seasons of life we are promised that in due season, we will see a harvest.

My prayer for my ACL colleagues in this new academic year is that they can see that God is present in every season of life, and that He will help them see that the seasons of life are **providential**, and when the seasons are **perplexing**, His grace is present. God is the only one who can enable us to find **purpose** in the seasons of life.



—Dale Solberg

Dale is the Director of Learning Resources at EPIC Bible College and Graduate School. He has been a member of ACL since 1992.