

WISDOM LITERATURE #5 'FINDING MEANING IN LIFE'S SEASONS'

Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

This 'a time for everything' passage is well known to most of us. I didn't know it at the time, but I first heard these words in the early 1960's – The Byrds group hit song 'Turn Turn Turn', whose lyrics I now know were almost totally drawn from this passage. Both before and after The Byrds, much has been written and sung concerning the mystery of the seasons of life, probably beginning from this Bible passage by wise King Solomon, the human co-author.



Many Christians are more aware of God as Creator with the changing seasons, in awe of the beauty displayed. God of course created seasons (Genesis 1:14-15) to which all life on earth responds, and are powerless to change; each season and the transition between each is part of God's plan. **Would you say humans respond to seasons differently from other life? What are the elements or factors denoting seasonal change that are most influential for you?**

The seasons are cyclical, each season can be sometimes shorter or longer, but they come around year after year in the same order (something emphasised in Ecclesiastes), and each season has a God ordained purpose. It is this cyclical pattern that is a powerful metaphor for the nature of human existence. Just as nature changes with the passing seasons, so too do our lives with the passing of time. **Discuss the different characteristics associated with each season. Are there differences between life's seasons and nature's seasons? If so, what are they?**

Our lives are marked by periods of growth, abundance, change, and rest. Each season, if we allow it, serves a purpose, shaping us and preparing us for the next season or cycle of seasons. Somehow these transitions between seasons seems to 'support you in noticing where God is in your everyday life ... and deepen our gratitude and relationship with God' (Linda Cherek – Loyola Spiritual Centre), we learn more of who we are in Him. **Are you able to say which season you are in right now? When are you expecting a transition?**

Amongst this cycle of change we can be sure our God is unchanging and ever present. It would seem we are to embrace the life cycle of seasons, the periods of transition in between, placing our trust into the safe hands of our Saviour Jesus. The winter, time of pause, reflection, rejuvenation; the spring time of planting, new projects, new goals; the summer time of growth and unlocking our full potential; the autumn of both reaping and letting go of what no longer serves. **Are we able to embrace each season with an open heart? What is God saying about your season? What lessons are to be learnt?** Now is the time to reflect, time to plan action, time to take steps.

Prayer *Lord, thank you for the seasons of life. Please help me to know which season I am in. Help me to make the adjustments you ask of me and teach me to trust in your timing and to find peace in your plan. Amen*