

The Seasons of Life

Harriett, my dear wife of 60 years, first introduced me to the concept of life's seasons:

Spring initiates our birth and introduces the innocence of childhood. The new blooms in our garden have tender roots and must be spared environmental extremes. Children are protected from the many dangers of this world by being obedient to their parents. It is a beautiful season of life with cool nights and warm days, with carefree laughter and pure uninhibited joy ... and it is a prelude to –

Summer. The warmth of each day increases significantly as we move into adolescence where the heat of peer-pressure can be overwhelming at times. The dreams of youthful ambition seem unattainable, but we press on regardless. We yearn for "privilege" only to learn that with it comes "responsibility." This important season soon gives way to –

Autumn. This is the most productive season of our lives. The hard work of summer plowing is rewarded annually with an abundant harvest where we reap what we have sown. With the cooler evening temperatures there is time for us to enjoy the fruit of our labor. It is time for facing truth and reflecting on its consequences. It is a beautiful time, where the mountains and wooded areas are a palette of color as the leaves render their vital factors back to the trees, giving them reserve for winter and reminding us of a spiritual truth, "...he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it." Matthew 10:39 We humans, like the leaves, are never more beautiful than when we surrender our lives to our Creator and let Him live His life in us. Sooner perhaps than we'd like...it is –

Winter. The days are shorter now. Changes brought about by this season have more to do with discovering and coming to terms with our limitations. The secret of this season is to "be content," not only *with what we have*, but with what we can expect to accomplish in any 24-hour period. The snow has come and the drifts are piled high. Our lives seem circumscribed as we consider what we can and cannot do. We are house-bound to a certain extent, but full of praise to the Lord for providing longevity and with it frequent opportunities to mentor younger men and exercise a ministry of being *salt* and *light*. The cozy hearth, while less dramatic than the fervid, heated, sweaty blaze of activity during previous seasons, has an attraction all its own. Even our physical appearance has the marks of winter, with snow on the roof, but fire still in the furnace.

The Seasons of Life; gifts from a loving Heavenly Father, granted as a means for us to *glorify Him in our mortal flesh*.