



SCRIPTURE READING: Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

1 To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: 2 A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; 3 A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; 4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; 5 A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing 6 A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; 7 A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; 8 A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace. 9 What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth? 10 I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it. 11 He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.

INTRODUCTION:

Right now, the world is going through an interesting season. There are a lot of questions and concerns. “*What am I supposed to do?*” “*How long will this go on for?*” “*Am I going to catch the virus?*” “*Is it really ok to get my Big Mac?*” “*Are we going to run out of money?*” “*What about toilet paper?*” The list of questions and concerns go on forever. The good news is that God not only knows the answer, but He is the answer! Faith doesn’t always know where it is being led, but it loves and knows the One Who is leading. We often sing, “*My Lord knows the way through the wilderness. All I have to do is follow.*” This is so true, and means even more when we are going through a stormy season. Jesus said, “*I am the good shepherd*” (John 10:11). Since Jesus is good, He will never lead us astray.

Quite often, chaos and confusion can bring a person closer to Christ. It drives us to seek answers and direction like never before. It is at this point we can encounter a closeness and comfort that can only come from the Christ in chaos. The Apostle Paul said in II Corinthians 12:10, “*Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.*” This is the time for God’s people to be strengthened through Christ.

In our scripture reading, we see that God is a God of order, timing, and purpose. Because God’s word is sure, we can have hope in the midst of chaotic times.

God had a purpose for creating the sun and the moon (Genesis 1:14-18). The sun gives us light during the day, while the moon reflects just enough light for the night. The purpose of these two great lights is also to signify seasons and times. They are consistently following the pattern God laid out (Genesis 8:22).

Life follows patterns and seasons as well. There are three purposes for this:

- Different seasons in life provide balance and growth. Life will have birth and death, weeping and laughing, love and hate.
- These seasons also keep us in a place where we need to depend on an unchangeable God in an ever-changing world (Ecclesiastes 3:11). We never know what tomorrow holds, but we do know the One who holds tomorrow.
- Above the dark cloudy season sits a bright and shining Son. It is just a matter of time before the sun shines through. If it weren’t for the cold cloudy days, we wouldn’t appreciate the hot sunny days. Thank God for different seasons!

QUESTIONS:

Addressing two verses a day is recommended for family devotions. The questions are designed to stimulate conversation and open the lines of communication.

DAY ONE

(v. 1) — God has a purpose in everything. What do you think His specific purpose is for you during this time? It might be a good time to look up verses on the will of God (Ephesians 5:17-33) (I Thessalonians 4:3-12; 5:18).

(v. 2) — What kind of spiritual seeds can you plant during this time? Many of us have extra time on our hands. It is a great opportunity to plant the word of God in our hearts and minds as well as others. How can you use media and technology to do this?

DAY TWO

(v. 3) — As the body of Christ, we are encouraged to build each other up in the Lord. The Bible word used to mean “build up” is “*edify*.” There are eleven references in the New Testament referring to this. See if you can find a few in the Bible and think of some creative ways you can edify other believers during this time. Start with Ephesians 4:29.

(v. 4) — There has been a rollercoaster of emotions lately. Some have been joyful to have time off of work, only to realize that bills will eventually have to be paid. There may be fear, anger, frustration and anxiety flowing through your heart and mind. What kind of emotions have you experienced lately? How have they

changed over the last week? Knowing that our thinking affects our emotions, look up what the Bible says about the way we think (Proverbs 23:7) (Philippians 4:4-8).

DAY THREE

(v. 5-6) — *“Refrain from embracing”* has not been easy for many of us. Some have not been able to hug parents, children, and grandchildren lately. So often we don't appreciate something the way we should until it is taken away. What are some of those things in your life that you appreciate a bit more now that it is taken away?

(v. 7) — There are plenty of different views, opinions, thoughts, and beliefs pertaining to the Coronavirus outbreak and how to handle the situation. Do you think there is *“a time to keep silence, and a time to speak?”* How can God get glory in this? See Colossians 4:6.

DAY FOUR

(v. 8) — Love is something that should abound more and more in the church (I Thessalonians 4:9-10). How can we show the love of Christ, even if there are different opinions and views on how to go about life during the pandemic?

(v. 9-10) — Solomon is not promoting to abstain from work. He is putting in perspective the mundane routine of life without having God at the center. It is all vanity without God (Ecclesiastes 2:1-11). One of the blessings of getting away from a normal work routine is to refocus on eternal things. Sometimes it will allow us to have a single focus on Christ and allow the Spirit to transform us (Romans 12:2). How can this time be a time of spiritual transformation in your life?

DAY FIVE

(v. 11) — Perhaps God is about to do something *“beautiful”* during this time in your life and family. *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts”* (Isaiah 55:8-9). Read Romans 8:28 for another reminder of God's purpose.

REVIEW:

- *“To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.”*
- Faith doesn't always know where it is being led, but it loves and knows the One Who is leading.
- Quite often, chaos and confusion can bring a person closer to Christ and magnify Him.

- Because God's word is sure, we can have hope in the midst of chaotic times.
- This season can be a time of growth and spiritual balance as we seek God and appreciate what He provides for us.

CONCLUSION:

Seasons are a lot like seasonings. They don't all taste the same. Some of them on their own don't taste good at all. The blend of seasonings is what makes them taste great. God has allowed our lives to have several different seasonings to make us great. All the different seasons we experience provide balance, growth and appreciation for who God is (Romans 5:1-5).

We need to be encouraged during this time to accept the season with thankfulness, joy, and anticipation for what God can do in us and through us. It is at the darkest hours when God's people shine the brightest.

- While under house arrest, Paul wrote New Testament scripture.
- While in prison, John Bunyan wrote Pilgrim's Progress.
- While quarantined on the island of Patmos, John wrote the book of Revelation.

Consider what kingdom work you can do. It's time to find God's purpose for this season. Don't waste the opportunity to plant, edify, think like Christ, be thankful, season your speech, love, refocus, and let God work. An opportunity like this is very rare. Let's not waste it.

This season will pass and the day will come when we all look back to remember the *“CORONAVIRUS DAYS.”* The question is, will we do something with this time that will affect eternity? Will we look back on this season from Heaven with our Saviour and be glad we found the purpose of it?

Just as the moon reflects the light of the sun, so we should reflect the light of the Son of God. This is our purpose. *“Ye are the light of the world”* (Matthew 5:14). The world in is in great need to see Christ! *“To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory”* (Colossians 1:27). What better time than this!

PRAY FOR:

- Safety and Health
- Discretion and Wisdom
- National Leadership
- Pastoral Leadership