

Job 29

Read Job 29:1-17: Life is full of seasons. Job longs to return to better times. He recalls being engaged in helping others and being well respected and prosperous.

To everything *there is* a season, A time for every purpose under heaven: -A time to be born, And a time to die; A time to plant, And a time to pluck *what is planted*; -A time to kill, And a time to heal; A time to break down, And a time to build up; A time to weep, And a time to laugh; A time to mourn, And a time to dance; (Ecclesiastes 3:1-4)

In the day of prosperity be joyful, But in the day of adversity consider: Surely God has appointed the one as well as the other, (Ecclesiastes 7:14)

Our life circumstances tend to dictate our emotions. Our jobs and relationships and finances and health all affect our outlook. **God wants to get us to a place where we have joy despite our circumstances.** The only way to do that is to keep returning us to our insecurities; and witness God's deliverances.

Many of the psalms are cries for help amidst disturbing circumstances. As the psalms continue - the writer's attention is diverted from himself to God. That is when the attitude-improvement comes. Our own issues will always be there. The difference is what we focus on. Our nature is to focus on ourselves. An otherwise blessed situation can become a place of sadness if we don't set our minds on Christ continually.

Why are you cast down, O my soul? And *why* are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him *For* the help of His countenance. (Psalm 42:5)

We stop taking inventory of our blessings; and we become consumed by our issues. The negative things tend to shut out the good thoughts. This is probably one reason to always begin by giving thanksgiving in our prayers. You could go into a prayer thinking that you are in a bad situation; and discover that you are among the richest of men in God's blessings. Even Eve was dissatisfied in the Garden of Eden; without much outside temptation.

The other aspect of development is that we need to be in touch with issues that we may feel that we have already mastered. In other words we are not able to just

keep moving up in our lifestyle. We don't want to take any delays or steps back. We need to remain equally comfortable in a desirable situation or in a tight situation. To truly graduate to another life-circumstance is based on how well I can handle the one I'm in.

I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: -I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:12-13)

Read Job 29:18-25: Job reflects on having it all, in a sense. He was the man who people looked to for direction and help (like a king). His dealings and decisions went very well. He shares that he envisioned that his children (his posterity) and legacy would continue and increase. Instead of stability; it is severed. It can never be about our glory.

There are times when we seem to be unstoppable. There other times when we can't get out of our jam. We don't learn much driving down the highway; but we do learn things when we get stuck in the mud. **We become better people during tough times.** The key is to man-up and get better; not bitter. Some people rehearse the circumstances of unfair treatment in their childhood; or their demise in other ways. The issue is not *what life could have been*; it is having enough character to move forward and forget about the past. Our humility, sympathy, appreciation, character, hope, understanding, introspection, and faith increase when times are tough. These things actually erode during good times.

Better to go to the house of mourning Than to go to the house of feasting,
For that *is* the end of all men; And the living will take *it* to heart. -Sorrow *is* better than laughter, For by a sad countenance the heart is made better. -The heart of the wise *is* in the house of mourning, But the heart of fools *is* in the house of mirth.
(Ecclesiastes 7:2-4)

Even though trials are therapeutic; we can only handle so much. People are spiritually sick; but they are not in touch with reality when they feel good. God uses physical and emotional sickness expose the underlying spiritual disease that needs to be dealt with. In other words, God has given us pain to force us to change unhealthy lifestyles. He has given us depression to force us to abandon empty and imaginary hopes. These built-in discomforts are indicators that we missed out turn off and are ignoring God's more-subtle directions.

Why should you be stricken again? You will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick, And the whole heart faints. From the sole of the foot even to the head, There is no soundness in it, But wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; They have not been closed or bound up, Or soothed with ointment. (Isaiah 1:5)

Nobody wants to be back in the place of trials. It can be a long way to fall. We tend to lose track of trying to be the complete servant. Somewhere along the way we get used to the idea of being served. We get upset when we get pushed back down to the daily duties. Our possessions and expectations can set us up for expectations of continuance or disappointment. We are not an accumulation of our possessions. Our possessions can go; and leave us as still-rich people. The more times we undergo a trial; the less disturbing they are. We increasingly-assume that God will do something.

Hope deferred makes the heart sick, But when the desire comes, it is a tree of life. (Proverbs 13:12)

Regardless, our failures and disappointments are all well within prescribed God-appointed boundaries. Perhaps our efforts to cut short the trial is preventing us from being cured. I need to pray that God would use me today in whatever capacity he sees fit...and that I accept it and do my best with appreciation.

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

It has been a revelation to me that the same kinds of wins and losses come and go over time. The difference is how I interpret them. One colleagues incomplete act can become my purpose...not my opportunity to criticize.