

'For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven.' Ecclesiastes 3:1

It's God's desire that all His children go from glory to glory and God in His wisdom has designed our growth to occur across seasons. By His design all our seasons are interconnected however transitions across seasons aren't automatic. Whether we do anything about it or not times and seasons will pass, but transitions must be intentional and a key to successfully transitioning across seasons is to steward the current season we're in well.

This series we are looking into 5 areas we need to focus on to help us understand how to steward our seasons well trusting that the Holy Spirit will grant us revelation, insight and understanding so we always go from glory to glory.

Mandate

"There is a right time and a right way to do everything...." Ecclesiastes 8:6 ERV

Every school year has a curriculum with learning objectives and an assessment that students must pass to demonstrate understanding and some level of mastery of the subjects taught. Likewise seasons also have a curriculum, learning objectives and assessment that determines if we successfully transit to the next season or become stagnated.

Unlike schools where all students face the same study objectives and assessment, the criteria for transition depends on our ability to understand the whats and hows of the season. 'What' refers to the mandate: what God has equipped us to accomplish that season in terms of our character, knowledge of Him and whatever else He's looking to draw out of us. 'How' refers to our disciplines for the season. There are foundational disciplines all believers must practice but various seasons call for specific concentrations which can only be guided by the Holy Spirit.

"So we have not stopped praying for you since we first heard about you. We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding. Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, you will grow as you learn to know God better and better." Colossians 1:9-10

The starting point for exercising God's mandate for the season is to check with the Lord what He would have us do. Paul understood that this was something to be prayed about consistently so that he wouldn't function based on assumption. There were seasons in his life where the Holy Spirit forbade him from preaching in certain areas which means that it's not always about what seems good but what God is placing emphasis on for that period.

Prayer: Lord give me understanding of the purpose for this season and Your counsel on how to successfully navigate it so I fulfil Your mandate.

What's in Your Hand

"Do not despise these small beginnings, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin, to see the plumb line in Zerubbabel's hand...." Zechariah 4:10

In merit focused organisations one of the key determinants for promotion is demonstrated capacity, meaning the people have shown that they have the capacity to function at the next level. God doesn't allow us to transit into new seasons based on emotion but a demonstration of having used the resources of the current season well. These resources could be time, our gifting, ideas He's planted in our hearts and so much more.

"Then the Lord asked him, "What is that in your hand?" "A shepherd's staff," Moses replied." Exodus 4:2

Unfortunately we don't always realise that the key to opening the door of the next season is already in our hands. Which means we can get so focused on our idea of what we want God to do that we lose sight of what He's already done. When Moses encountered the Lord he had no idea that his seemingly simple shepherd's stick would be a pivotal instrument in God's hands to bring deliverance to His children. Whatever we need to enter the next stage/phase is something we're already utilising, but possibly looking down on.

"For forty years you sustained them in the wilderness, and they lacked nothing. Their clothes did not wear out, and their feet did not swell!" Nehemiah 9:21

Nothing is ever wasted with God. Even if the circumstances around us don't seem to be favourable and we feel we can't point to anything to work with, our relationship with Him is always a starting point. What kept the Israelites in the wilderness was their inability to appreciate God's sustenance even in the midst of the harshness. There will be times when things get rough but God is also watching to see how we tackle those times so that our relationship with Him grows as He enlarges us from season to season.

Prayer: Lord open my eyes to see what You've already placed in my hands to unlock the doors to my next season. Help me not to despise anything You're doing in/with/through me.

Speak to the season

"Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light." Genesis 1:3

Because we are made in the image and likeness of God, we also have the capacity to frame our world with words. When it comes to stewarding our seasons, the words we speak are critical. We can either prolong a season unduly or align with God's intentions based on the words we speak. Even though we think they don't matter, even carelessly spoken words have an impact. We shouldn't say what we don't want to see in our lives or around us.

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit." Proverbs 18:21

"For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says." Mark 11:23

"And they have defeated him by the blood of the Lamb and by their testimony." Revelation 12:11

There's a place for positive confessions in successfully navigating seasons. This isn't about motivational speeches but actively confessing the word of God until that becomes our testimony. As we speak God's word over our day, our lives, etc the Holy Spirit guides and directs our steps to align with the requirements of the season. Even if we don't receive a specific word, we must consistently profess what Jesus did for us on the cross and the victory we have in Him regardless of what external circumstances may demonstrate. By doing so we bring our spirit and our minds into alignment with heaven's agenda for our lives so we don't end up talking ourselves out of God's agenda for our lives.

Prayer: Lord bring me to the place of understanding the power of my words. Let my speech come into alignment with Your plan for my life. Help me discipline my tongue not to speak careless words and place a door over my mouth so only words that edify come out of my lips.

Catch the foxes

"Catch us the foxes, The little foxes that spoil the vines, For our vines have tender grapes." Song of Solomon

One of the most painful things we can experience in transition is seeing what could be but not being able to partake of it. This is what happened to Moses when transitioning from the wilderness season to the promised land. Much has been said about Moses and his anger, but what cost him the promised land was a series of acts of disobedience.

"Then the Lord said to Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'Raise the staff in your hand...'" So Aaron raised his hand..." Exodus 8:5-6 NLT

"Then the Lord said to Moses, "Lift your hand toward the sky" So Moses lifted his staff toward the sky..." Exodus 9:22-23 NLT

"...speak to the rock over there, and it will pour out its water. ..." ...Then Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with the staff, and water gushed out..." Numbers 20:8, 11

"So you will see the land from a distance, but you may not enter the land I am giving to the people of Israel." Deuteronomy 32:52

Aaron raised his hand not his staff. Moses lifted his staff not his hand. Moses struck the rock rather speak to it and God still responded powerfully in spite of their disobedience. These examples show us that it's typically seemingly small things that can frustrate God's work in our lives. Moses modified his obedience to suit himself and it didn't seem to be a problem because he was getting results. What Moses and we ourselves don't take into account is that sometimes God will respond despite our disobedience because He wants to do something in the lives of others. However our consistent disobedience will cost us the new season.

Prayer: Lord show me where the little foxes of disobedience have been in operation in my life. Help me to identify and address any underlying issues that can cost me my new season. Help me to be intentional about obeying all Your instructions

The Volume of the Books

"Then I said, 'Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me— To do Your will, O God.' Hebrews 10:7

We have come to understand that every season has a mandate which requires intentionality with our words, resources and obedience for us to successfully navigate. As important as they are these alone aren't enough to take us through if we neglect the foundation of spending time in the word of God.

"Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them." Psalms 139:16

Everyone's assignments and seasons have already been intentionally and meticulously recorded by God in each of the books He has for us. But even if we can't see those books for ourselves, we have access to His mind through His word. Spending quality time reading, studying and meditating on His word opens us up to His plans for us because it contains not just words but a life giving spirit. This is why sometimes some scriptures seem to jump out at us in certain seasons even though we may have read them countless times before.

"Then I said, "Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart." Psalms 40:7-8

"in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the Lord through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem." Daniel 9:2

""Don't misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose." Matthew 5:17

Daniel received insight for the season of preparing Israel for deliverance through the word of God and was able to take the appropriate steps. Jesus could confidently say He accomplished all that was required of Him because He consistently spent time in the word of God during His earthly ministry. Likewise for us as we pray, fast and spend time in God's word we receive wisdom, understanding, direction and the capacity required for the season. God's word helps us filter our desires from His will so we don't dissipate energy in the wrong direction. It also provides step by step guidance as we won't always see the full picture from the start.

Prayer: Lord help me prioritise spending quality time in Your word. Holy Spirit please speak to me and give me understanding and direction every time I read the Bible so I accomplish the purpose of every season.

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