

Honor and Bloom in All Seasons....

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (LB)

There is a right time for everything: A time to be born; a time to die;
A time to plant; a time to harvest; a time to kill; a time to heal;
A time to destroy; a time to rebuild; a time to cry; a time to laugh;
A time to grieve; a time to dance;
A time for scattering stones; a time for gathering stones;
A time to hug; a time not to hug; a time to find; a time to lose;
A time for keeping; a time for throwing away;
A time to tear; a time to repair;
A time to be quiet; a time to speak up;
A time for loving; a time for hating; a time for war; a time for peace.

Cooler mornings and evenings, darkness arriving earlier, grasshoppers on the plants.....the season of fall is upon us. I noticed today that the new blossoms on my geraniums have slowed considerably and their leaves have begun to curl up and turn red and gold. And I sense within me a sort of weariness in trying to preserve what's left for as long as is possible. I have mentally moved to a sense that summer is over and I might as well give up...after all, they aren't going to look like they once did. I've reached a sort of giving in to the negative stage instead of caring for them with all the love and zest that I began the summer with. And yet I know that with some special deadheading and pruning, water and care, they could look pretty nice until the frost comes.

I think we have some of the same issues when it comes to aging. Everything seemed so full of blossom and promise when we were younger. Our energy and our abilities seemed endless. Then, the summer of our lives passed and all we can remember is how soon we stopped blooming and being fruitful and the sense of giving up seems to well up within us. What's the use? How can we make a difference? We're not young anymore, we're out of touch with the technology world and our energy level isn't what it used to be. What happened to that spunkiness of the spirit within us? What happened to our possibility thinking?

Then I realize, God is saying he will tend to us. He will deadhead our branches of self-pity, loss and fear and replace them with hearts filled with gratitude and the energy to bless others out of the reservoirs of our blessings. For it is most certainly true, an attitude of gratitude and unhappiness cannot co-exist. His joy will be our joy and this season of our lives will have purpose and meaning. We may bloom differently but we will bloom for God just as he designed. Join me this week as we seek to bloom for Jesus regardless of our season in life.

Prayer: Gracious and loving God, give us hearts for our journeys that are filled with gratitude for all you have provided for us. Keep us from grieving the loss of a season that has passed. Instead, God, fill us with hope and joy and energy to rejoice in the season we are in. When we are lonely, comfort us, Lord, and when we are fearful, give us your courage and strength. And in all of our days, tend us as a loving gardener does his garden, so that we may bloom for you all of our lives. May we bring the fragrance of your love into the lives of all we meet. For your grace, your love and your constant forgiveness, we give you thanks this day. In your precious name we pray. Amen.