A Time for Everything....Seasons of Life

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (NCV)

There is a time for everything and everything on earth has its special season.

There is a time to be born and a time to die.

There is a time to plant and a time to pull up the plants.

There is a time to kill and a time to heal.

There is a time to destroy and a time to build.

There is a time to cry and a time to laugh.

There is a time to be sad and a time to dance.

There is a time to throw away stones and a time to gather them.

There is a time to hug and a time not to hug.

There is a time to look for something and a time to stop looking for it.

There is a time to keep things and a time to throw things away.

There is a time to tear apart and a time to sew together.

There is a time to be silent and a time to speak.

There is a time to love and a time to hate.

There is a time for war and a time for peace.

I was in a shopping center just this past week and it struck me that all that pertained to summer was on sale for 60-85% off, all that pertained to fall was 30-50% off, and Christmas was being assembled and displayed right before my eyes at full price. It seemed rather overwhelming and left me feeling that no one season was the focus...they just sort of all ran together. It made me sad that summer couldn't be honored and enjoyed with its picnics, swimming and the State Fair before I got serious about my menu and decorating for fall and Thanksgiving. And even then it was hard to decide what I needed for that when the Christmas tree was up with all the trimmings begging me to move into the holiday season.

We are so often like that with our lives in their seasons. We can hardly wait to grow up and get married and have children and then retire and become grandparents. We are always stretching to get to the next season instead of intentionally and intimately processing the one we are in. God did not give us control over time. When we demand the right to ultimate control over time and the results of that time, we truly are doomed to hopelessness and frustration. But if we give each season of our life to God and trust God to be in control, then our activities, our seasons can always have purpose, gain, joy and meaning. The secret to peace with ourselves and God is to discover, accept, and appreciate God's perfect timing.

God has a plan for each of us. Thus God provides cycles of life, each with its work for us to do and for our enjoyment. And although we may face many problems that seem to contradict God's plan, these should not be barriers to believing in God, but rather opportunities to discover that God works in all things for those who choose to love and follow God.

So what season of your life are you in right now....can you identify it? What is God revealing to you in this season and where can God be of help to you? Identify the parts of the season that bring you joy and reflect on the choices you have made in this season, remembering that our choices reflect what we value. Our lives are God's gifts to us and what we do with them is our gift to God. We must cherish this season, embrace it, learn from it....before we move into the next season.

Prayer: Gracious and loving God, we praise you for the seasons of our lives. Help us to not dread them or fear them but to trust that you will be our companion on our journeys and you will provide all that we need. Grant us courage and energy to be about our journeys and wisdom to make wise decisions. Fill our hearts with love and forgiveness and give us eyes to see those we need to share your love and ours with. And God, help us stay in the present moment so that we may truly say, "This is the day that the Lord has made. I will rejoice and be glad in it." For your love, your protection and your guidance, we give you thanks this day. In your very precious name we pray. Amen.

