

Remnant Life Church  
November 9, 2014  
**“The Inevitability of God’s Seasons”**  
Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

1. The importance of time
  - Everything we do during the course of our day is measured by and against time
    - It gives structure to our lives
    - Virtually every aspect of our day is built around time
    - We vacation to get away for its constraints
    - We even use it to measure our accomplishments – sports (except for baseball baseball)
  - It gives us a place to start and even a way out when we point to our watch
  - We measure it to the most finite degree and use it to give weight to our words (“I haven’t got all day!” “Whoa, whoa, wait just a minute!”)
2. God created time - *Gen. 1:3-5*
  - *And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. <sup>4</sup> God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.*
  - God created the concept of a beginning and an end
    - Within that are the seasons of the year
      - *And God said, “Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, (Gen 1:14)*
    - Everything that begins, comes to an end
    - Without an end we cannot understand and appreciate value or worth
3. In our walk as Christians we live within God’s time as individuals and as a church – we also call these seasons
  - Sometimes the hardest thing to do is know when something has come to an end and recognize the need for change
  - Katerina and my decision not to stay at the past church
    - Hard decision while also a very easy one
    - Our not staying was necessary to allow the new to begin
    - If we had stayed it would have hindered what God wanted to do there next and what He wanted us to - RLC
      - If we stay in a place we do not belong we are preventing the next season from beginning
      - Jesus said that He had to leave in order for the Holy Spirit to come (*John 16:7*)
      - Where one time ends another always begins
4. An on-gong challenge for the church today

- Willing to recognize and release those things whose season has ended...
  - It is not always easy to discern
  - Many Christians and churches stay in things that God left long ago and then we wonder why we are struggling or don't seem to be getting anywhere
    - God's grace is always where He is
    - Even in the difficult times, His grace comforts and strengthens us
  - We can become very busy doing the things of God but be accomplishing very little and completely outside of His will by staying in a season that God brought to an end
  - *Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life* by Charles Swindoll – Story of a man in Dublin in the mid 1800s rushing to catch a train. He climbed aboard one of Dublin's famous horse drawn taxis and said to the driver -"Hurry, I'm nearly late ... drive very fast". Off they went at a furious pace and the man sat back in his seat and closed his eyes with some relief. After a while he opened his eyes again and glanced out the window only to realize that they were going in the wrong direction. It suddenly occurred to him that he hadn't told the driver where to take him so he called out 'do you know where you're going?' The driver shouted back, "No, Sir, but I am driving very fast!"
  - God wants what we do for Him to prosper and bear fruit **within the season** He has appointed
  - Joseph walked through the seasons that God had prepared for him
    - Some were very difficult – time in slavery and prison
    - Some were wonderful – Prime Minister of Egypt
    - God was with Him through them all
  
- 5. What can keep us in places and circumstances that we do not belong?
  - Blind devotion to an activity or situation
  - Taking personal ownership of something that is not mine to take or keep
  - Familiarity – why do we do it, because we always have...
    - Activities many times define a church and become its identity
    - What should define us is we are passionately pursuing Him and His love permeates everything that we do and say
      - In John's account of the Last Supper
        - Jesus washes the disciples feet
        - He tells them that one of them will betray them
        - Just before He tells Peter that he will deny Him He says...
      - “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:34-35)
  - Success
    - Success should not automatically mean repetition

- The success of something within the church is about being in the right season of God's leading and the product of His grace for that time

6. How do we avoid staying too long?

- Pursue Jesus passionately first in all that we do
  - In whatever we do and even what we say the question is...“Who does this glorify?”
- *May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accept (receive) one another, then, just as Christ accepted (received) you, in order to bring praise to God. (Rom 15:5-7)*
  - Humble prayer
  - Embracing the wisdom of Godly council
  - Hold on loosely to the things of life – rock song early 80s
  - Love each other wastefully
    - Love defers itself to another without hesitation and without conditions
    - I can do all kinds of things but without love they don't mean anything (I Cor. 13)

7. Ultimately all of time is in God's hands

- *Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life? (Luke 12:25)*
- *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. (Prov. 3:5-6)*
- Those paths encompass every area of our lives – including our time
- Like everything else, our time will come into right balance when we understand that it belongs to Him and when we submit to Him (Prov. 3:6) time, and what do within those times, are made straight to His glory.