

When the Future Looks Precarious

May 24, 2020

TIMES AND SEASONS ARE CONTROLLED BY GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

- *To every thing there is, not only a season, but a purpose.*
- *God never wastes one moment, one circumstance, one event, one relationship, one consequence of your life, but He is intimately involved weaving every moment into the sovereign tapestry of your life.*

Psalm 31:13-16 ESV

13 For I hear the whispering of many-- terror on every side!-- as they scheme together against me, as they plot to take my life.

14 But I trust in you, O LORD; I say, "You are my God."

15 My times (*eth - season, experience, occurrence, fortune*) are in your hand; rescue me from the hand of my enemies and from my persecutors!

16 Make your face shine on your servant; save me in your steadfast love!

John 7:30 ESV

30 So they [the chief priests and the Pharisees] were seeking to arrest him [Jesus], but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come.

Daniel 6:16-24 ESV

16 Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king declared to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!"

17 And a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel.

18 Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no diversions were brought to him, and sleep fled from him.

19 Then, at break of day, the king arose and went in haste to the den of lions.

20 As he came near to the den where Daniel was, he cried out in a tone of anguish. The king declared to Daniel, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?"

21 Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever!"

22 My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, and they have not harmed me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no harm."

23 Then the king was exceedingly glad, and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

24 And the king commanded, and those men who had maliciously accused Daniel were brought and cast into the den of lions--they, their children, and their wives. And before they reached the bottom of the den, the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces.

Isaiah 46:9-11 ESV

9 remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me,

10 declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,'

11 calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of my counsel from a far country. I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 ESV

1 For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

2 a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;

3 a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

4 a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

5 a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

6 a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

7 a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

8 a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 ESV

11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

Ecclesiastes 3:14 ESV

14 I perceived that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it. God has done it, so that people fear before him.

Romans 8:28 ESV

28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

CARE FOR YOUR SOUL IN GOD'S PRESENCE

- *There are two indisputable warning signs that you have not properly cared for your soul:*
 - *succumb to temptation and sin*
"Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh." Galatians 5:16 ESV
 - *do not possess the peace that passes all understanding*
- *Your mind and your emotions can become your worst enemies.*
- *You will make your worst decisions when under stress, fear or depression.*

Psalms 42:5 KJV

5 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.

Psalm 42:5 NASB

5 Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him for the help of His presence.

Philippians 4:6-7 ESV

6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

anxious (merimnaō) distraction, to be drawn in different directions, anxiety, troubled with cares

7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

surpasses (hyperechō) to have or hold above, rise above, to be superior in rank, authority, power

Mark 4:35-40 ESV

35 On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side."

36 And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him.

37 And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling.

38 But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?"

39 And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

40 He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?"

- *If you are unable to sleep in the midst of the storm, then there is still more of God's peace for you to experience.*

SEEK GOD'S WISDOM, DON'T LEAN TO YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING

- *God always promises His guidance for all who seek it.*
- *God's guidance comes in many ways: His Word, the inner voice, inner witness, circumstances, other Christians.*
- *In the times when you feel the most constrained, when the course seems the most confusing, are the times when God is in control the most.*
- *Accurately discerning God's guidance is more difficult when we are under stress, anxious or depressed.*
- *Discerning God's guidance is most accurate when we are at peace and rest in God's sovereignty and presence.*

James 1:5 ESV

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

Proverbs 3:5-8 ESV

5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.

6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

7 Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.

8 It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.

Acts 16:6-10 ESV

6 And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia.

7 And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.

8 So, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas.

9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."

10 And when Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

Acts 16:22-26 ESV [Paul & Silas in Philippi]

22 The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods.

23 And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely.

24 Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them,

26 and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened.