

“The Passage of Time and Seasons”

Message by DD Adams

LENT 5

Kempton Providence U.M. Church

April 7, 2019

The text for today is from Ecclesiastes, chapter 3, verses 1 through 13.

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven, a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh.

A time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.

What gain have the workers from their toil? I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. God has made everything suitable for its time; moreover God has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; moreover, it is God’s gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil. This is God’s word for God’s people.

Please pray with me. God we pray your blessing on the hearing, reading, understanding and doing of your word today. Open ears, hearts and minds as we come together to learn. Cause our time with you and others to be a blessing. Amen.

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven” (Ecc 3:1). In creation God made four seasons which are caused as the Earth, tilted on its axis, travels in a loop around the sun each year. The sun revolves around the center of the Milky Way galaxy, and that’s about as far as I want to go into Earth and Space Science.

In our lives we enter and exit different seasons. We’re constantly changing just as the planet earth, but God remains the same. He changes not. Change is unavoidable and it holds many opportunities for us as we walk with God along our spiritual journey.

My concern is this. As we enter new seasons and opportunities in our lives do the new opportunities draw us closer to God? Or do we respond to the changes by distancing ourselves from God? We know, it’s us who moves away from God. God never moves or changes, but in His great love for us, He offers us many opportunities to draw closer.

Sometimes, it’s because of the difficult challenges in our lives that we walk away from God and do our own thing. But, our best choice as God’s children is to embrace and always include God whatever we’re going through. To believe that

God has ordained what's appropriate for our time. It may bring sadness, but later, the tears turn to joy. The seasons they fade away, new ones come, but then flow in a new direction, always changing, with God being inescapably in control. With all the different seasons, we must let go and allow things to happen; it's simply not in our power to change what's already been set into motion.

We should take it all as it comes. To offer it to God and know that God works all things together for good. There may be nothing good about death or loss or some of the changes we endure, but in God's will for our lives, He secures a way for us to draw closer to Him. We embrace the seasons of our lives as a gift that's given to us by God. To be grateful for it all, and to receive the hope that only God provides.

We live in a modern, fast paced, tech-savvy world. Do we remind ourselves of the importance of the seasonality of life and leave the control in the hands of God? God has already said to us that our times are in His hands (Ps 31:15), but for many of us, we'd prefer to have what we want now—rather than having to wait.

The world tells us to believe and live in a manner that says there's no lines between busy and rest, work and play, and the lines are blurred. But we should take time to be holy, to worship together, to forgive and love one another, to enjoy the time we spend together—to trust and recognize that as the days, months, and years fly by, our lives are in the hands of God; this is *our* journey.

There is no doubt, that when we enter a new season of our lives it brings changes we never thought would happen. Will we embrace the season with its changes that God has gifted us with or will we struggle and wrestle with God resisting what's already been set in motion?

We have an opportunity to pleasure in our toil with or without God. If we travel without God the cost is too high for ourselves and our relationships. If we continue in a pace that's too fast—we let the time run by us that God has gifted us with.

Can we choose to move at a slower pace? God has a perfect pace that's just right; it's unique and custom made with a rhythm that includes time spent with Him and with those we love. The world tries to set a fast pace for us, but that's not God's pace, and the world's agenda isn't God's agenda. God works slowly, and we serve an unhurried God.

Let's keep in mind God's seasons and His unhurried timetable. Let's wait on God and enjoy what we've been given and not jump ahead. Ecclesiastes reminds us that there is a time for every matter. The rhythms of business and play, work and rest and to look for the natural ebbs and flows of time and energy in this beautifully-created world. “[God] has made everything beautiful in its time ... for there shall be a time for every purpose and for every work” (Ecc 3:11,17). Let's embrace what God has gifted us with now and enjoy it. Amen.