

# A Word Of Hope

“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.” Proverbs 25:11

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## *Winter's Rest*

*“A time of replenishing, resting and restoration”*

*Ecclesiastes 3:1 There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.*

Have you ever paid attention to the progression of the seasons? In the spring seeds are planted and begin to germinate and sprout. Through the summer they are cared for and continue to grow until the fall, when the fruit is fully mature and harvested. Then the harvest is followed by a period of winter where things appear to be dormant. The trees lose their leaves. The ground becomes dry and seems devoid of anything living. But actually the winter season is ordained to be a time of rest. It is a time when the soil becomes replenished by the nutrients, as the residue of the harvest decays.

Just as the natural life operates in a cycle of seasons, so does the spiritual life. In our spiritual walk we go through the same type of process from seedtime to growing to harvest to rest. If one season is missed or skipped the process will not be completed successfully.

Some seasons seem much more pleasant than others. Spring is beautiful we would agree, while we may feel winter is cold and barren, but God's wisdom is much greater than ours. He knows that each season must take place to ensure the proper end results. By most opinions winter is not a favorite season for many people. The blooms of spring are long over.

The warmth of summer is a fading memory and the harvest has been enjoyed and shared for its season. Winter seems to be barren and empty without much going on. It seems to be devoid of life. But a farmer knows that what is seen with his eyes is not exactly what is going on. He knows that the ground is resting and replenishing for the next cycle of spring. It may seem dormant on the surface but beneath the blanket of snow, the ground is being restored. The soil is receiving back the nutrients that it expelled during spring, summer and fall. This part of the cycle must take place in order for a successful planting in spring. Without it the soil will remain depleted of the nutrients that the seeds need to germinate and sprout up with.

In our spiritual lives we will also go through times that are barren and perhaps cold. To us they may seem lifeless. With our natural eyes we cannot see anything happening. But you can be assured that even “*seasons of winter*” are ordained by the Lord for his children. God knows that we need times of restoration and that areas in our lives need to be replenished with the nutrients of His Word. We need to take time to rest and be restored.

During harvest time we often spend much energy in gathering and sharing. In ourselves we become depleted and tired. It is not a mistake that winter follows the harvest. This is God's plan for us so that he can plant another season of spring in our hearts and repeat the cycle to bring forth another harvest to be enjoyed and shared. Do you feel as though you are in a spiritual winter? Then don't dread it. Instead, look to God for a time of restoration. He longs for you to rest in Him. He desires to restore you. He wants to get your heart ready for the next season of planting.

All of us at one time or another, no matter how mature a Christian we are, will experience a season of winter in our spiritual lives. This is the way God has ordained the seasons to be. Without each one of them our lives would be lacking. During those times when it seems that nothing is happening in your life, take heart. God knows exactly what He is doing.

This is a time to spend in His presence. A time to draw yourself away from the toils often found in the other seasons. A time to feast upon the riches of His Word and replenish your hungry soul. A time to drink deeply from the wells of salvation. Your spiritual well-being depends upon this season of rest. Don't be in a hurry. One thing you can be sure of... Spring is on the way! ☞



### *When Weakness is Made Strong*

*Psalm 103:14 He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.*

*2 Corinthians 12:9 But he[God] said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."*

All of us have weaknesses of one kind or another. It is impossible not to have them because we are human. Many times these weaknesses seem to hinder us more because in ourselves we would like to see them removed. They are annoying or aggravating to us.

Especially as Christians, we think that we should be perfect without weaknesses. But God knows we are human. He knows what we are made of because He made us. He knows that we are frail and imperfect. He knows that without Him we cannot make it. But God has a wisdom greater than ours and sometimes allows our weaknesses to remain so that in spite of them He can make us strong in His strength.

Paul had a weakness that buffeted him daily. Three times he prayed that God would remove it from him but God's response was "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

God knew that by keeping Paul's weakness intact He would Glorify Himself when he made Paul strong in spite of it. By doing this, Paul also knew that it was not his talents or abilities that gave him success but God's strength made perfect in him.

When we admit our weaknesses and yield them to the Lord then we will find that God will give us a strength that is more than able to make us successful. He will give us grace for each day and replace our weaknesses with His strength and power. Those who see us will marvel and give the Glory to God.

Do you have a weakness that you wish would be removed? Perhaps God has a better plan for you? Yield your weakness to the Lord and let His strength be made perfect in you. You will find more strength for the need than you would ever have on your own. ☞

***Ephesians 2:10***  
*For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*



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