



SEASON OF GROWTH

- 4. OBEDIENCE**
- 5. SERVICE**
- 6. PREPARATION**

SEASONS OF A WOMAN'S LIFE

LOIS EVANS

The context - 'All things must pass'.

Women are seasonal creatures and when we look at our lives in the season we are in, we are better able to cope with some of the challenges and appreciate the blessings while we still have them.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SEASONS?

Seed planting, Growth and Harvest

Seed planting - *the Lord calls us to himself, we commit ourselves to His service, and we enjoy communion with Him.*

Growth - *lessons in obedience, service and preparation. This involves being tutored in self discipline, sacrifice and serenity.*

Harvest - *stepping into primary responsibilities for which we have been prepared. Contentment but not complacency, saying yes even when it takes us out of our comfort zones and the blessings of fulfilment as we see the plans for our lives being brought to pass.*

It is essential to learn about our seasons because there is a unique plan for each of us, thus submitting to God's unique path will keep us balanced as we navigate through the many choices we have to make.

When we have a personal relationship with God; an ongoing awareness of His presence and a devotion to His word, it will give us stability, confidence and direction as we pursue the various ministries God calls us into during each season of our lives.

Psalm 139, Matthew 5:16 and Jeremiah 29:11

THE SEASON OF GROWTH

4. OBEDIENCE

In nature growth comes as a result of health and nourishment. As a Christian our spiritual growth depends on our health, and our health depends on our obedience to God.

Obedience is rarely easy. It may mean wrestling with our emotions; overcoming prejudices and preconceived notions; humbling ourselves and pleading for strength to carry on. So if we are to grow we are to obey.

1 Samuel 15:22 behold, to obey is better than sacrifice and to heed than the fat of rams. John 15:15 if you love me, keep my commandments.

ON YOUR OWN

Describe a time when obedience was difficult for you. What did he ask you to do? Why was it hard to do?

Read Jonah 1:1-17

What is Jonah called to do?

Describe in detail Jonah's response to God's call, including his actions.

How would you describe Jonah's temperament?

Make note of words and phrases that are repeated.

Do a search on the distance between Jaffa, Israel and Gibraltar, Spain representing Joppa and modern day Tarshish. What is the distance between these two cities? Read Jonah 1:3 in the amplified bible. What is Jonah trying to achieve by going to Tarshish?

Examine your life.

What lengths have you gone through to avoid doing something the Lord

asked you to do?

What was the outcome?

How did your decision affect those around you?

How will you act in obedience the next time the Lord asks you to do something?

DISCUSSION - WHEN YOU SURRENDER YOUR WILL AND OBEY GOD, HOW DOES THAT IMPACT YOUR FUTURE DECISIONS ? WHY?

What price have you recently paid to obey God?

What was your reward?

THE SEASON OF GROWTH

5. SERVICE

Part of growth comes from serving the Lord in the mundane things in life, it is being faithful where he has us, this causes us to develop the character traits that will be needed for the next season.

Service is all about perspective. Focus on the one we are serving. He places us in situations that uncover gifts we didn't know we had. Service is also how the Lord uses us to minister and bless others. Ephesians 4:12-13.

ON YOUR OWN

How do obedience and service intersect in your life?

Describe what it means to serve in your current season of life.

Do you find it easy or difficult to serve? Why?

Read 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12:1-13 and 1 Peter 4:7-11

List the spiritual gifts mentioned in these passages

List the common words and themes found in these verses

How are spiritual gifts to be used?

List your unique gifts, talents and spiritual gifts.

How are you using them for the Lord's service?

If you are unsure of your spiritual gifts, you can take one of the following spiritual gifts assessments to help you discover them.

<https://gifts.churchgrowth.org>

https://www.lifeway.com/lwc/files/lwcf_pdf_discover_your_spiritual_gifts.pdf

DISCUSSION - DESCRIBE HOW YOU ARE SERVING IN THIS SEASON OF YOUR LIFE.

What changes if any would you make?

Share how obedience and service intersect in your life

Do you find it easy or difficult to serve? Why?

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6. PREPARATION

In the season of growth, an intense time of cleansing is necessary before we fully enter into the future he has planned for us. The purification of our thoughts and motives is part of this process of cleansing so that the motives that lie behind our actions will be pure and godly. All of this takes time and we have to believe that God knows what he is doing while we go through this preparation process.

ON YOUR OWN

How do you respond to times of waiting? Think of a specific situation.

How did you respond to God? To others?

Was there anything you were purified from during that season?

Read Esther 2 - what is happening in this part of Esther's story?

In what way is Esther prepared for her first encounter with King Ahasuerus?

Read Esther 4-7 - how is Esthers preparation for her first encounter with king Ahasuerus different than her preparation for her encounter with him in chapter 5?

Look up the definition of the words "equip" and "prepare"

List the ways Esther is equipped for her purpose.

What tools does she have at her disposal?

How has God created her for this role?

How does she have to prepare?

Think about your own life your purpose and calling.

Write down how God has equipped you for the purpose he has called you too.

Think about your background and upbringing, your gifts, talents and skills, personality and temperament, and anything else that makes up who you are.

Think of these as the tools and equipment needed for your purpose. You can also use them to help you achieve your purpose.

List the ways you need to prepare or get ready for your purpose.

What is the Lord teaching you that you will need for the next season of life?

DISCUSSION - SHARE HOW GOD IS PREPARING YOU FOR YOUR PURPOSE.

What gifts and talents has God equipped you with to be used for your purpose?

What areas of life still need refining before moving into your next season?

MY PERSONAL NOTES



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