
In and Out of Season

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Overview

Spending focused time with God should happen every day of our lives.

The problem we face is that we often neglect this time when life is going fine.

Then, when a crisis arises, we turn to Him and ask Him to bail us out of our situation.

Do you know someone who claims to be a friend, but only calls you when he or she needs something?

How does that make you feel?

Wouldn't you rather have a relationship with that person based on a simple desire to fellowship together without personal agendas?

When people call you with a personal agenda, over time, how do you begin to respond?

So why do we do this with God?

Why do we only pour our hearts out to Him when in crisis mode?

He loves you and desperately wants to fellowship with you.

He wants a relationship with you.

Do you automatically trust? Or is trust something that is earned over time?

We learn how to lean on God by knowing God.

When we devote time to the relationship on a daily basis,

we learn God's desires,

we learn His plan for us.

When we only call upon Him in crisis,

we may be asking Him for the wrong things.

More importantly, daily time with the Lord may help us avoid a crisis all together!

The Apostle Paul was a seasoned Christian. He learned the importance of drawing in to God daily. In his last letter to Timothy, Paul gives Pastor Timothy this very wise advice:

2 Timothy 4:

"...be prepared in season and out of season"

Today, we are going to learn the following points from this passage:

- (1) What does it mean to be prepared in and out of season?
- (2) What are the results when we do not follow this advice?
- (3) What are the results when we do follow this advice?
- (4) What are some practical ways in which we can apply this advice?
- (5) A challenge to the church.

(1) What does it mean to be prepared in and out of season?

We all prepare at one time or another for our carnal responsibilities such as
work,
homework,
outings,
meals, etc.

When it comes to spiritual responsibilities, it is no different.

How much time do you spend each day getting ready for work?

- How much time do you spend each day preparing for the things God has planned for you?

- When people talk about natural disasters coming our way, how do we respond?

- How many of you have provisions for such things now?

- How many of you have prepared for a spiritual crisis?

We never know who God will put in our path
or what season in life might be
right around the corner for us.

We must draw into the Lord daily in order to be prepared.
Not just in a time of crisis, but all of the time!

Psalm 34:10

***The lions may grow weak and hungry,
but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.***

Just before Paul tells Timothy to be prepared, he tells him why he must be prepared in and out of season.

2 Timothy 3:14-17

14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God[a] may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

If you want to know God, we must spend time in Scripture,
which is God speaking to us.

We must devote time to Prayer,
which is how we speak to God.
We must start somewhere!

- When we want to get into physical shape, do we start off full throttle or do we work are way up?
- Do weight lifters start by using heavy weights or lighter weights?
- Do new runners start with a 10k or do they start with 1 mile?

Romans 15:4 (NIV)

For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

(2) Benefits of Pressing In

When we read God's Word,
when we speak His Word,
when we turn in prayer,
when we act out our faith **daily**,
we are preparing ourselves.
We are readying ourselves for the storms.

Matthew 7:24-27

24 “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

Being prepared out of season prepares us for the storms!

Do you want to be the house on sinking sand or the house built on the rock?

We have all heard the phrase, “you get out of it what you put into it”. This is no different when it comes to the things of God.

Psalm 14:2

***The Lord looks down from heaven
on all mankind
to see if there are any who understand,
any who seek God.***

If you are not doing this **daily**, begin small and work your way up, just like a weightlifter does.

Start off with the 10 pound weights and work your way up to the 100 pound weights.

What are some ways in which you can begin your spiritual preparedness?

If you are doing these things, are you increasing in your devotion time?

We must increase our goals

in order to be constantly in the presence of God.

Jesus Prayed for long hours:

Matthew 24:23

23 After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone

Mark 1:35

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.

Luke 5:16

16 But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

Job 8:5-6

***But if you will seek God earnestly
and plead with the Almighty,
6 if you are pure and upright,
even now he will rouse himself on your behalf
and restore you to your prosperous state.***

If you want to be prepared, you must seek earnestly.

This requires effort.

The more you push in, the more you will be prepared.

(3) Pressures of Pressing In

When we start off small, there is very little resistance.

When we start off big, there is much resistance.

1 Peter 2:

2 Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, 3 now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Peter is telling us to start off with the simple things first.
If you start out with too much, there will be a lot of resistance.
You must work your way up, building your spiritual muscles.

Satan does not want you to dig in.

He will apply the resistance.
However, when you build up your endurance
by spending more and more time with God,
The more effort you put in, the easier it will be to push right through any resistance.

James 4:7

7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness with God in order that he may be prepared to resist the Devil.

Matthew 4:1-3

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

After Jesus was at his physical limit, he was also at his spiritual peak!
He spent 40 days and 40 nights with God the Father. He was spiritually prepared.

How did Jesus Resist?

4 Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'

Jesus spoke God's Word. The very word He spoke is key.

Jesus was filled and charged spiritually by God's Word.

When we are not devoted to the

Word of God,

Prayer,
and Fasting, we cannot resist the devil.

(4) Challenges

James 4:8

Come near to God and he will come near to you

- ✓ Pick a specific book in the Bible and read at least two verse each day
- ✓ Spend 15 minutes each day in prayer.