

A Time for Everything

by: Dave Heitman

“God has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart, yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.” - Ecclesiastes 3:11

Currently, it is springtime, and flowers are blooming regardless of a global pandemic. Some things in life will outlast our present crisis. While I certainly acknowledge the seriousness of viruses and death, the current need for social distancing, I also look to those things that will outlive these days.

From my garden, I see red roses, white azaleas, and bright blue hydrangea in full bloom. A reminder of our Creator, who begins the biblical story in seasons, and “makes everything beautiful in its time.” There have certainly been darker days, days of world wars, famines, and prior pandemics. While we live in unprecedented times, perhaps focusing on eternal things as those Christ-followers preceded us, may prove more helpful than the next news alert.

“You should never go to God because He is useful. Go because He’s beautiful. And yet there’s nothing more useful than finding God beautiful.” - Timothy Keller

Literature captures these eternal themes. C.S. developed Narnia out of playing with miniature bits of twigs and branches from his backyard with his brother growing up. Escape into a good read to remember love is stronger than fear. Immerse yourself in spring, stop to smell the roses, make a new commitment to prayer. The world will always change. Going back may not be possible. However, choosing to go forward in those higher eternal truths God has set in all our hearts will outlast current challenges and excite us for the future.

Reflection/Challenge:

- Reflect on personal values that are most important to you. Pick one value, take some time, and describe why this value is important to you. How do you express this value in your everyday life, including what you did today? How might this value guide you when facing a challenging season?
- Take a nature walk, observe what is growing on around you despite today’s news headlines.
- Read something not required for school or work. A fun novel or interesting biography is always worth the time to read. What eternal themes can you discover?
- Make a commitment to pray and converse with God. Schedules are in flux so build in time to pray and walk on your lunch break, in the morning, or evening, or all three. Take note of items you and God are discussing (you might be surprised what eternal themes may emerge if you do this for a week).

Futher Questions:

- Time during quarantine can be a bit wonky - people forgetting what day it is, no plans for the weekend, etc. How do seasons help us better understand time and God's purposes for us here and now?
- How do we recognize what season we are in?
- Is there value that God can bring in each season? (autumn, winter, spring, summer)
- How do we keep from becoming jaded in our present season?
- Will there be seasons in Heaven or are seasons an "earth-thing?"