

The Seasons of the Soul

The seasons come and go and now we're in the colourful season of autumn. The trees, cloaked in green leaves for spring and summer, are now shedding their brilliant foliage in every flaming shade from pale yellow to deep crimson. The bigger trees look majestic, and the smaller trees look like daylight fireworks - sparking against an autumnal sky. On the ground is a carpet of such variety and richness that no interior designer could ever hope to match it. In short - it's a truly beautiful time of year; and all this from a moment which is the dying end of the tree's life cycle. Beauty from decay - imagine that!

There's a lot of change going in our world today, some good and some not so. As grandparents we're painfully aware our grandkids are growing up in a world far different from the one we knew as children, that's both positive and negative too. But amid all the changes, one thing, one person, never changes - our eternal God. The God of creation remains unchanged and unchanging. His life is always the same. His character is always dependable. His truth, ways, and purposes do not change. His Son does not change. He's the same "*yesterday, today, and forever*". His children will enjoy His fellowship a million years from now. The world may fade, the stars may fall, the seasons may change, and winter may come. But the God who has been our help in ages past is our hope for years to come. In Him we have permanence, stability, joy unshakable, and life unending. If you are a follower of Christ, remember to remain close to Him during the shifting seasons of life. During autumn, we all know that winter lies ahead, but if winter comes, can spring be far behind? Watching the red-gold leaves fluttering to the ground in autumn reminds us that nature's cycles are mirrored in our lives. Autumn is a time for letting go and releasing things that have been a burden. All the religious traditions pay tribute to such acts of relinquishment. Autumn is the right time to practice getting out of the way and letting the Spirit take charge of our lives. Autumn reminds us of the impermanence of everything. We have experienced the budding of life in spring and the flowerings and profusions of summer. Now the leaves fall and bare branches remind us of the fleeting nature of all things.

Many years ago I preached a sermon on the "Seasons of the Soul". I can just about remember it concluding something like this;

“Spring - when all is new, energy is in boundless supply, and we feel like there is nothing we cannot tackle for God.

Summer - when we want to be out and about and busy for God, but the spirit tires quickly in the heat and we must water it with prayer.

Autumn - a time to take stock of all the fruit which God has provided.

Winter - a time of harsh conditions but icy beauty too, when even the most ordinary thing can take on a kind of majesty.

Which season are you in just now?”