

# Seasons

July 2020

The LEAD20 Conference, themed “Seasons,” had attendees thinking about the process of change, timing, and the future. When the national team chose this theme in the early fall of 2019, we had no way of knowing the timeliness of the message or the events that were soon to transpire.

As we have watched the current scenario unfold over the last five months, there is no doubt that we are in a new season. We are learning new ways to do things. Old ways don’t work the same as they did before. No matter how good things were or weren’t previously, the season has changed, and our ability to adjust with this season is critical.

In times like this, it’s possible to ask questions: Where is God? Is He still in control? The ability to see beyond the obvious, whether it is through discernment in understanding the times and events or through revelation to have an awareness of God and His activity, is of vital importance.

When God began creating our world, the first thing He did was say, “Let there be light!” That light wasn’t for His sake—He can see in the dark; it was to bring revelation and the ability to see—to help bring clarity to what was happening. In our current times, God’s Word is a light to help us cut through the fog of fear, uncertainty, and doubt.

God’s Word assures us that He is God and He never changes. His character, His attributes, and His love for us is the same yesterday, today, and forever. His Word also shows us that the seasons of this world—events, circumstances, even the culture—are constantly in flux. However, His Word reminds us that He is always in control.

In Isaiah 43:19 (NLT), God was telling His people, “*For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it? I will make a pathway through the wilderness. I will create rivers in the dry wasteland.*” Notice several things in this verse:

1. **There was change coming.** “*For I am about to do something new.*” Change is often challenging. We get used to doing things a certain way. We like what we know because it’s predictable and controllable. However, change sometimes needs to happen for that very reason—to keep me changeable and dependent on God. I have also found that when God is doing something new there is a reason and it’s bigger than my comfort level.

2. **Were they going to miss it?** “*See I have already begun! Do you not see it?*” Is it possible in the midst of difficulties and change to miss what God is doing? In this passage, God is challenging the Israelites to look forward and to focus on the sovereignty of God instead of on the circumstances that surrounded them. Many Christians wander through life never reaching their potential in Christ because they lose their perspective. Their focus is shifted from God and what He can do or wants to do to the circumstances and the change that is happening around them. We must rely on God not just talk about it. We must have a confidence that God is in control, and we must have an expectancy in His ability to manage events! When we are looking anywhere but at God, we find ourselves on shifting ground, or unstable terrain, with no foundation.
3. **The new season was going to be very different.** “*I will make a pathway through the wilderness. I will create rivers in the dry wasteland.*” When God moves, He does so with intentionality and purpose. Whether He is bringing direction to an uncertain situation or turning a barren environment into something life-giving, God has a plan, and it’s bigger than us. We must be people of faith who have and live in positive expectation for God to do something.

God, through Isaiah, is challenging us to look for His activity: “*I am doing a new thing . . . do you not see it?*” Faith, like vision, is the ability to see with expectancy that which is not yet! When you know God and remember what His Word says, you can have a confident expectancy that when life begins changing, while you don’t know what the final outcome is going to look like, it is not out of control. God’s got this!

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When we boil it all down, there are really only two basic approaches to life:

1. **Living by Faith:** confident expectancy in God’s involvement and direction
2. **Living by Fear:** no confidence or expectancy of God’s intervention (i.e., no vision)

**Where our vision is focused determines what we see happening in our lives!**

In Philippians, Paul, who was in a dungeon going through a very difficult season, wrote, “*For I fully expect and hope that I never will be ashamed, but*

*that I will continue to be bold for Christ” (Philippians 1:20, NLT). He had a confident outlook. His confidence was not in wishful thinking or an optimistic outlook but was in a never changing, all powerful, fully in control God. In the Message, the same verse states, “And I’m going to keep this celebration going because I know how it’s going to turn out. Through your faithful prayers and the generous response of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, everything he wants to do in and through me will be done.”*

While Paul was in the dungeon, he lived in confidence that God was involved, that nothing was happening without God’s awareness and approval, and that it would fulfill His purpose. As we continue moving forward in this season of uncertainty, let’s be sure we are focused on the One who is unchangeable. As we focus on the eternal truths of His Word, we can stand firm in a culture and season where there is so much uncertainty and fear. Your confidence in God and His ability to direct your path and provide for your needs will be a light in the darkness—a stark contrast. Don’t be surprised when people approach you because of the hope they see in you.

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