

Knowing Your Spiritual Seasons through Prayer

One vital but often overlooked part of an intercessor's role is to discern and pray in concert with God's purposes for the different spiritual seasons of life. To pray through your spiritual seasons and to pray through the spiritual seasons of your church, intercessors must seek God's supernatural guidance about the seasons or different spiritual time periods we're in that bring with them unique challenges and opportunities in both our personal lives and in our churches.

How to do this prayer practice.

1. Become educated about spiritual seasons.



Knowing the season of your church (the body of Christ) that you're in is important because God is doing a unique work in us in each season. Each season is preparation for the next season to come and each season is a part of what needs to be accomplished in your life and the life of the church for the purpose of destiny and advancing the kingdom of God. Often times we miss out on the promise that a new season brings because we don't pay attention to what the spirit is saying or we don't want to embrace the season even though it has been revealed to us by the spirit.

This is a subject that really needs to be taken seriously by intercessors. It's also a great message to all of us that we and our churches don't become overnight spiritual successes but rather God nurtures us and grows us through different seasons until we are equipped for the harvest.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 says "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:" (NRSV) what is the mysterious thing about seasons? As a Prayer Leader how do you know the season your church is in and how do you know the seasons in your own life? God is a God of seasons. Think about it, the whole earth revolves around seasons. We have winter; spring, summer, and fall in most parts of the world but not all have all four seasons. Just as the earth revolves around seasons so do our lives, interestingly enough, it is not God's desire to

withhold the seasons from us but He is a God who wants us to know Him and to be able to discern the seasons we are in. Jeremiah 33:3 says “Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you did not know” (NIV)

Every season is necessary and every season is preparation for the next season to come. Seasons begin the moment we receive salvation! Remember when you were a new Christian? You were on fire for the Lord. Nobody could keep you from church! You were at every event, every bible study, serving in multiple ministries, couldn't get enough of God's word, and joy and excitement followed you everywhere you went. Do you remember those days? It reminds you of Acts 2:42 which says “They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to breaking of bread and prayer” It was a great time but they could not stay there and neither can we if we are to walk with God and fulfill his plans for our lives.

There are many season that follow after that. There are seasons of uncertainty. These are seasons when you know God is working but even though you believe He is working, God may not be revealing anything specific and you cannot make sense of the things that are going on in your life. These are seasons where God is teaching us to totally depend on him. For most Christians it is a scary place because we are used to depending on ourselves.

There are seasons of wilderness or valley experiences. These are often times of lack, or times of not being where you want to be or think you should be. Times are usually very hard in the wilderness and the wilderness or valley can be a season that seems to never end – or at least that is how we often feel. In the valley God often is building our character, teaching us patience and teaching us or showing us about the things about us that displease him. He uproots those things that are not like him as he forms us more into the image of his son Jesus Christ.

2. Spend time in diligent prayer.

How to discern the seasons comes through prayer! Diligent prayer! As we spend time with God daily through Bible study and prayer we become more and more connected to God and more aware of His presence in our lives and our surroundings. 1 Corinthians 2:15-16 says “Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gift of God's spirit, for they are foolishness to them and they are unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. Those who are spiritual discern all things, and they are themselves to no one else's scrutiny. For who has the mind of the Lord so as to instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.” (NRSV)

3. Use your discernment of seasons to pray beyond the obvious surface needs.

As Prayer Leaders, God has given us a unique assignment to pray for the needs of the body of Christ. How can we know all of the needs unless God reveals to us what they are? It goes beyond praying for specific prayer request from our congregation. God has given us charge to discern the need of the body as to work alongside of Him to advance the kingdom.

If you are a Prayer Leader in your church or you lead a Prayer Group it is critical that you spend time “listening spiritually” to what is going on around you in the spiritual atmosphere. Not only is this important so that God can lead and direct our prayers for the body of Christ but also that we may give spiritual guidance to those we have been charged to lead. An effective Prayer Ministry is more than just coming together to pray but there is a charge given by God and because the charge comes from God, He will provide insight and protection for those who stand on the wall as watchmen looking for the dawn of a new day.

4. Listen well

The one thing that I have observed about most men and women whom God has called as intercessors is that they talk more than they listen. This is not to say that they are not effective in their prayers but they could be a lot more effective if they would humble themselves, learn to listen, receive, and pray.

5. Pay attention to your own life and that of your church to see messages from God about the type of season you're in.

God does not make the matter of discerning complex. What I have learned to be true is that as a Prayer Leader, usually what is going on in your own life is what the body of Christ is experiencing or the season the body of Christ is in.

As an example in my own life, I was laid off from my job where I had been employed for 10 years. I had always been employed from the time I graduated high school and so this was a challenging time for me. At first I embraced it as a season of rest because I knew that God was doing something very new in my life. But as time went on and I realized that a year had passed and we were now in a recession and jobs were harder to find, I began to grow a little weary and wondered what God was really doing. Many people lost their jobs and had been out of work for 1-3 years or more.

This was a season for me of learning to trust God. He wanted me to know him as Jehovah Jireh (The Lord Will Provide) in every area of my life! For the church He wanted to teach us how to depend on and rely on him to provide for the church as well. How can we be strong in our lives and trust God if we have not gone through anything to experience God for ourselves? How can the church preach and teach and win souls for the Kingdom of God if we have not gone through anything together as a body.

6. Pray that your seasons will be an inspiring testimony to others.

Sometimes what gives us strength and faith to go on is being aware of another brother or sister's hardships in your congregation and watching them go through it with faith. Our trials are not only for us! Our seasons are not only for us! We will never know all that God uses our trials for so that he can draw others to him and show his glory through our weakness.

7. Look for God's confirmation about the revelation of seasons

Not only does God reveal seasons to His gate keepers, but God will also confirm what He has spoken to you though others. How does He do this? He confirms it through songs, people, the preached word, and through the reading of His word.

8. Seasons change from year to year

The body of Christ goes through a new season every year. The Spirit of God for the Intercessor reveals the time the body of Christ is about to enter a new season. The second thing is that during the season as we experience things in our lives these are also some of the things the body of Christ is experiencing. So what am I saying? There is a specific time when the body of Christ changes seasons and there is a shifting in the spiritual atmosphere known or revealed to the Intercessor when the change is about to occur.

Here is an example for a better understanding. Those who preach the word of God are often and most times tested in the word before they preach it, meaning they have experienced life from within the text they preach so the word is real to them. In other words they have to go through before they can come boldly with the word so that it can pierce the hearts of others.

God also does this through those He has called to lead Prayer Groups and those He has called to intercede on behalf of the body of Christ and others. God does not want us to be ignorant in what we do for the kingdom so He provides us with the tools and resources we need to be effective. Many Prayer Ministries fall because they do not know the significance of the call and because Pastors are not nurturing the ministry as they should.

8. Embrace your current season

Not all seasons are peaceful or restful. We must not despise our season but we must embrace it regardless of how hard a particular season may be. It is necessary! And since we know that God loves us so much that He sent His only son to die for us we know that God would not do anything to harm us because there is no evil way in God. We also know that no matter how we view the season we can claim Romans 8:28 "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose".

One of the not-so-easy seasons in my life has been my season of "Coming out of the Valley" Sounds crazy doesn't it? How could coming out of the valley or wilderness be a not-so-easy season? Here's a principle that I have discovered. God has done a mighty work on us our dependence on Him in the valley. We have been tried and tested in the valley *and* then we will go through a series of test as we are coming up from the valley to see what we will do and how we will respond by continuing to depend on God.

I finally found employment and I was so excited and thankful – until I took my eyes off of God after the first year or so. I started to complain because I was under-employed and I wasn't where I wanted to be in life. Even though God had opened doors for me to go to college I now wanted doors to open for me to earn more money and walk into my destiny. But how many of us know that God will test you first with the things or places he puts you to see how well you do there before he moves to the place where he had planned for you all along?

The point I think God really wants us all to get is that if you have sought the Lord for your destiny and he has revealed it to you, then you will have to go through the peaks, valleys, and every other season in order for God to prepare you for what he has for you. Pride, arrogance, selfish ambitions, wrong motives, unforgiveness, anger, lustful desires, and whatever else your thing may be – none of these have any place in the life of the believer who desires to walk in purpose.

God is still bringing me up from the valley and I can see more clearly each and every day. My eyes are open and I can see what he is doing and I continue to be in awe at how amazing God is and what he will go through for me and for you to show himself real in our lives!

9. Know that the Scriptures promise that the harvest season will come.

The last thing I want to leave you with is this. Know that the harvest season will come! God promises it in his word! “God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill”? (NIV) There are many scriptures that speak to God's promise of the harvest for the believer.

The scripture that the Holy Spirit gave me right around this time last year and one the scripture I have been standing on this year is Isaiah 40:4 which reads “Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and rough places plain” (AKJV) Other scripture that speak to God's promise of the harvest are: Psalm 23:2 “He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters” (KJV). Psalm 30:5 “Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning” (ESV) All of these scripture speaks to seasons!

It is a part of God's ultimate plan that we go through and grow through our seasons so that we may walk in the season of blessing. There will be other seasons that we must go through after the harvests so don't get side tracked during the harvest season. After all we should have learned a lot during all the seasons we had to go through to get to the harvest.

I guess you all are wondering, “Well if this article is about seasons and God reveals seasons to Prayer Leaders and Intercessors, then what season are we in?” Well let's shout for joy together because the body of Christ has entered the season of harvest. Times of refreshing! Your tarrying has not been in vain. You have been faithful and because of your faithfulness it's your time! It has already happened! All of the things you have been waiting on God to do will manifest

themselves in this season! Isaiah 43:19 says; “See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.”

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