

Church Triumphant

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March 2007

“TO EVERYTHING THERE IS A SEASON”

Eccl.3:1

It is clear from the Bible that life is made up of seasons. These seasons are different in different parts of the world. In Australia and New Zealand, Christmas comes in the summer and is often celebrated with a barbeque on the beach. In the tropics, they talk about a dry season and a rainy season. Most of the world experiences spring, summer, fall, and winter. Here in California, we joke that our four seasons are mud, flood, fire, and earthquake. Yes, seasons are definitely a part of life.

Often the times of greatest conflict and fear come when there is a change of seasons. The worst blizzards often hit during the transition from fall to winter or from winter to spring. Floods often mark the transition from winter to spring if the snow melts too quickly. Tornadoes often mark the transition from spring to summer while the transition from summer to fall is hurricane season.

Our individual lives also have seasons – childhood, those tumultuous teenage years, starting a career, getting married, raising a family, letting go as your children grow up, retirement, old age. These are seasons of life. There are also spiritual seasons as we walk with the Lord from searching to salvation to service to standing in His presence and hearing Him say, “Well done!”

In the spiritual as well as the natural, the time of changing from one season to another can seem full of fear and uncertainty. “Will we have enough money to live on after we retire?” “How can I continue without my beloved...?” “What can I do, now that I have been laid off?” “Will I be able to find a job after I graduate?” “What will I do with my time after the children move out?” “What will happen to us if the stock market crashes?” “How will we make the mortgage payment if interest rates go up again?” Change can bring great fears and uncertainties. Yet change is what makes the seasons of life a reality.

If you are going through a change of seasons like so many are today, I have good news for you. Jesus Christ is Lord of the Seasons. He created the seasons. Seasons change but God never changes. “I am the Lord, I change not” (Mal.3:6). “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Heb.13:8). “...the word of God which lives and abides forever” (I Pet.1:23). “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever” (Ps.45:6). It doesn’t matter what you are going through. Jesus is there with you. When Jesus rose from the dead on that Sunday morning almost 2,000 years ago, He defeated every enemy that will ever come against you in any season.

How should you face the seasons of life? Whatever you are facing, you can face it with joy in your heart and the praises of God in your mouth because Jesus already faced it and conquered it through the power of His resurrection. If you live in upstate New York, you may be looking out your window at snow banks that are measured in feet instead of inches but I guarantee that one day soon, you will look again and see tulips or daffodils or lilacs. “Weeping may endure for a night but joy comes in the morning” (Ps. 30:5).

If you are going through a battle, rejoice in His promise that there is coming a day of rest. Are you going through a time of prosperity and blessing? Rejoice in His goodness and draw close to Him so you will have the strength to

stand in the day of trouble. Good times? Praise God! Hard times? Praise God! Times of feasting? Bless God and thank Him for His provision. Just lost your job? Bless God and thank Him that He is still your Source.

Seasons come and seasons go but God's Word never changes. His love for you never changes. His resurrection power never changes. The peace and the joy that He offers you doesn't have to change either. Keep your eyes on Jesus. Worship Him. Allow Him to lead you through the seasons of life with His hand in yours each step of the way. Live in the fullness of His resurrection power.

In the Philippines

When we sent out our last newsletter, our greatest concern was the battle heating up between the tribal people and the New People's Army (NPA), the communist rebels. Several tribal leaders had already been killed from ambush and all out war threatened. We asked you to pray and God answered in the way we least expected. He sent the rainy season. What a rainy season it was! The roads into the mountains were washed away by mudslides and massive flooding. The main highway between Tagum City where our headquarters are located and Kapalong at the foot of the mountains was under water as the main bridge between the two cities was totally submerged.

Our Filipino Director and his family had to evacuate their home as the entire village of Uraya was flooded. At one point, our headquarters church in Tagum City was turned into a refugee center for the villagers from Uraya and the Believers from Kapalong who were left stranded by the rising floodwaters. After about a week the rains became less intense and the floodwaters receded, allowing the villagers to return to their homes. By the time the rainy season had come to an end, the political situation in the mountains had calmed down and the NPA had retreated back into their strongholds, no longer posing an immediate threat to the tribal people. The rainy season had averted a season of war. Truly Jesus Christ is the Lord of the Seasons.

With the return of the "dry" season, the tribal Believers on Mindanao need our help. In some areas, the tribal farms were under water for six weeks and it will take time for the food supply to be restored. By the grace of God, none of our churches were destroyed but two of them suffered some damage and will need to be repaired. The new church in Kapalong was damaged by the heavy flooding in that area and the church in Sua-on that is built on a hillside suffered some damage because of a mudslide. We thank God for His hand of protection and for your prayers because we know the situation could have been worse – much worse. God is so faithful and we thank Him and praise Him for His goodness in all the seasons of life.

Howard & Barbara Gard

30 Day Prayer Focus

God has been so faithful to answer our prayers. We want to continue with a new 30 day prayer calendar. Please continue to join us in daily prayer for our Brothers and Sisters in Christ in the Philippines and for one another. Allow the Holy Spirit to direct you in prayer as you pray what is on His heart for each situation.

Day 1 – Pray for the tribal people whose gardens are still under water that God will provide them with the food they need as they replant and begin again.

Day 2 – Pray for those whose homes and businesses were damaged by the flooding that they can quickly recover, rebuild, and return to normal lives.

Day 3 – Pray especially for the Believers in Kapalong, currently being led by Pastor Oscar Guimbal as they seek to repair the damages to their new church and their homes.

Day 4 – Pray for the Believers in Sua-on led by Pastor Jonathan Saburan as they repair the damages to their church building cause by the mudslide.

Day 5 – Pray for our Filipino Director Allan Asang and his family and all the villagers in Uraya who had to evacuate at the height of the flooding.

Day 6 – Pray for the family of one of the church members there in Uraya who was recently shot. The police have no clue as to who shot him or why. Pray for God's protection on all the Believers in the village.

Day 7 – Praise God the church in Uraya did not suffer any damage. Our church and the Catholic church a block away are the only two churches in the entire village on the outskirts of Tagum City.

Day 8 – Pray for our dear Sister Dorothy Peschke in Davis, California whose husband Rev. Nolan Peschke recently went home to be with the Lord. Pastor Peschke was one of our original board members when Church Triumphant began in 1988. He faithfully preached the Gospel for 60 years and had a burden to bring unity to the Body of Christ in the Philippines as well as here in America. Pray the Lord will provide the finances necessary to pay all the medical bills left behind by his final illness.

Day 9 – Pray for the villages in Pastor "Pepper" Sabio's region that also suffered damage during the rainy season.

Day 10 – Pray for our Brothers and Sisters in Christ here in the States who have suffered loss caused by the violent weather as winter changes to spring – ice storms, blizzards, and tornadoes.

Day 11 – Pray for our headquarters church and Bible school in Tagum City. Praise God they were able to be a place of refuge for the evacuees during the recent flooding.

Day 12 – Pray for Pastor Albert and Emma Asang as they head up the Bible schools and church planting ministry of Church Triumphant.

Day 13 – Pray for the Bible school students who will be graduating at the end of the school year in March.

Day 14 – Praise God for the young people who are not ashamed to be faithful witnesses for Jesus Christ on college and university campuses around the world.

- Day 15 – Pray for God to raise up more laborers to be trained as church planters on Mindanao when the Bible school classes begin again in June.
- Day 16 – Pray for Pastor Zaldy Dayanan and his church in the village of Datu Ampunan.
- Day 17 – Pray for Pastor Bangunan and his church in the mountain village of Puyopayahan.
- Day 18 – Pray for Pastor Eddie Daje and his growing church in Andap.
- Day 19 – Pray for Pastor Jamiro and his faithful congregation in the tribal village of Santa Cruz in the mountains of Mindanao.
- Day 20 – Pray for all the churches and pastors that faithfully support the ministry of Church Triumphant that God will give them an effective outreach for Him both locally, nationally, and internationally. Be sure to pray for your local church and pastor as well.
- Day 21 – Praise God for His mighty resurrection power that is touching and transforming lives wherever this Gospel is faithfully preached.
- Day 22 – Pray for the chieftain of a Muslim tribe near Sua-on who led his tribe to renounce Allah and embrace Jesus Christ as Savior.
- Day 23 – Pray for Datu Oscar Bug-ot, head chieftain of the Talaingod tribe, that God will continue to protect him from the communists and give him great wisdom in leading his people in peace and prosperity.
- Day 24 – Pray for the upcoming elections in the Philippines that men and women of integrity will be elected to positions of authority throughout the nation.
- Day 25 – Pray that corruption within the current government will be exposed and dealt with properly and without violence.
- Day 26 – Pray that the great natural resources God has put in the Philippines will be used wisely and honestly to benefit all the people and not just the elite few who can then use their power to oppress and control.
- Day 27 – Pray for all the members of the tribal council in the mountains of Mindanao that God will give them great wisdom in how best to lead their people and to know which political leaders can and cannot be trusted to honor their word.
- Day 28 – Praise God that the hearts of kings and all political leaders are in His hands and He is able to lead them in the way He wants them to go.
- Day 29 – Pray for God’s hand of blessing and protection on Howard and Barbara Gard. Pray that He will lead them in the way that they should go and supply their every need from His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.
- Day 30 – Pray for God’s Kingdom to come and God’s will to be done in your life, your family, your church, your community, throughout your nation, and around the world.