



“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.” (Ecclesiastes 3:1)

A few days ago I felt the wind blow warm rather than cold. I also spotted some jacaranda blossom on the ground. It tells me that we are in a period of seasonal change. For those of you in the northern hemisphere, it might be a cool breeze or beech leaves turning golden.

I have encountered this famous verse from Ecclesiastes a few times recently. It is almost so well known that it is easy to take for granted. But what might God be saying to you and I through it this month?

I believe that we must always be alert to change as Christians, whether predictable or unexpected. It may not be us who are required to adjust. We may be the ones who need to help others do that.

Psalm 103 talks about our days being like grass, their fleetingness, their tendency to change without warning. However, Psalm 1 speaks of a tree by a river, strong and upright, bearing its fruit in season. Is this a contradiction? Not at all. We recall another well-known verse in the Bible telling us that Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. Come sun or storm, this season

or next, challenge or relaxation, if our faith is in Jesus, he will be the strength of our life, giving us the ability to cope with whatever comes our way and to help others in their weakness.

We can prepare for whatever season may lie ahead by securing our roots, by grafting to the vine, by building firm foundations. God will not let us down.

The Grass Is Greener Where God Is

Before I begin, I'd like to ask you a simple question: Have you ever looked at someone else's life and thought, "The grass is greener on the other side?" Perhaps you've wished you had someone else's talents, opportunities, friends, or circumstances. It's a phrase we hear often, but today I'd like to suggest something different: The grass is greener where God is.

Our reading today comes from 1 Kings 19:5–8,

Then he lay down under the bush and fell asleep. All at once an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat." He looked around, and there by his head was some bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again. The angel of the Lord came back a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you." So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he travelled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God.

Here we meet the prophet Elijah at one of the lowest points of his life. This is the same Elijah who had boldly stood before kings, called down fire from heaven, and witnessed God's incredible power. Yet after receiving death threats from Queen Jezebel, he ran into the wilderness. Exhausted, frightened, and emotionally drained, he sat beneath a broom tree and asked God to let him die. Elijah had lost hope. But what I find so beautiful about this passage is that God didn't respond with criticism or disappointment. He responded with compassion. The Bible tells us that an angel touched Elijah and said, "Get up

and eat.” Beside him was freshly baked bread and a jar of water. Elijah ate, drank, and rested.

Then God came again, providing even more nourishment because the journey ahead would be too much for him on his own. What an incredible reminder that God meets us where we are. There may be people here today who feel like Elijah. Perhaps you’re exhausted by school, overwhelmed by family situations, struggling with friendships, or quietly battling worries that no one else knows about.

Sometimes life becomes so heavy that we begin to believe we have to carry it alone. But just as God found Elijah beneath that tree, God finds us in our moments of weakness. His provision may not always come as bread from heaven, but He nourishes us through His Word, through prayer, through the encouragement of others, and through the quiet assurance that He has not left us.

Secondly, this passage reminds us that God changes our perspective. Elijah believed he was alone. He believed his story was over. His circumstances had become so overwhelming that they blinded him to God’s faithfulness. Isn’t that true for us as well? When we focus only on our problems, it’s easy to believe that everyone else’s life is easier, happier, or more successful. We begin comparing ourselves with others and convincing ourselves that the grass must be greener somewhere else.

But God gently reminds us that true peace isn’t found in different circumstances—it is found in His presence. In John 14:27 Jesus reminds us that the peace he leaves is not as the world gives so we must not be troubled or afraid. When we place our eyes back on Him instead of our problems, we begin to see hope again. We realise that God’s grace is enough for today, and His strength will carry us into tomorrow.

Finally, God reminds Elijah that there is still a journey ahead. After Elijah rested and ate, the Bible tells us that he travelled for forty days and forty nights to the mountain of God. Notice that God didn’t remove the journey. He prepared Elijah for it. Sometimes we pray for God to remove every challenge,

but instead, He strengthens us to walk through them. He equips us for what lies ahead because He knows we are capable through His strength. Where God leads us may not always be the easiest path, but it is always the best one. So perhaps the saying should not be, “The grass is greener on the other side.” Instead, let us remember this: The grass is greener where God is. Where God is present, there is peace in the middle of storms. Where God is present, there is hope in moments of despair. Where God is present, there is strength for every journey. And where God is present, lives flourish—not because life is perfect, but because His grace is sufficient. May we resist the temptation to compare our lives with others or believe that happiness lies somewhere else. Instead, let us seek God’s presence each day, trusting that wherever He leads us, He will provide exactly what we need. Because the greenest place we can ever stand is wherever God is.

Let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank You for being a God who meets us in our weakness and never abandons us. Just as You cared for Elijah, help us to trust that You will provide everything we need for the journey ahead. When we become discouraged or begin comparing our lives with others, remind us that true peace and fulfilment are found in Your presence. Strengthen us to follow wherever You lead, knowing that where You are, life flourishes. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Alicia Mderede
From a talk at Falcon College

Whatever work we do

Every day, billions of us get up to do vital work – teaching the next generation, growing crops, fixing cars and working in hospitals and governments. But what’s the Biblical understanding as to why we work, and how can we use whatever we do to share the gospel?

Created to work

‘The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.’ **Genesis 2:15**

Even before the Fall, God intentionally gave us the gift of work. The first command he gave to Adam in Genesis 3 was to tend to the Garden of Eden, soon after he was created – a role that was designed to be rewarding for Adam.

Unsurprisingly, our depiction of work as we live in a broken world has changed significantly compared to tending to the Garden of Eden. But it was still part of God's original plan and purpose for his children. So: 'whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters,' **Colossians 3:23**



Uniquely gifted

'Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.' **1 Peter 4:10**

The huge variety of unique skills needed for the thousands of different jobs that exist have each been created by our heavenly Father. We all have a part to play in helping to make an impact on the individuals, communities, and environment around us as we work.

Whether what we do is full-time or part-time, paid or voluntary, religious or secular, we all have different personalities and gifts that we can use to help fulfil God's purposes in this world.

An ambassador for Christ

‘We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: be reconciled to God.’
2 Corinthians 5:20

Each daily interaction with those we work with is an opportunity for us to share Christ’s love through word and deed and to be an ambassador for him. In the book of Matthew, Jesus gives us the first and greatest commandment and the second, to ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind’, and to ‘Love your neighbour as yourself’. How amazing is it that we can do this every day, as we are beacons of light to those we work with?

Furthering God’s kingdom

‘Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.”’ **Matthew 9:37-38**

Whatever we do, wherever we work, it can all be valuable in furthering God’s kingdom – in places around the world where the harvest is plentiful, but workers are few.

Serving In Mission, UK

<https://sim.co.uk/whatever-work-we-do/>

Quotation to think about

While women weep, as they do now, I’ll fight. While little children go hungry, as they do now, I’ll fight. While men go to prison, in and out, in and out, as they do now, I’ll fight. While there is a drunkard left, while there is a poor lost girl upon the streets, while there remains one dark soul without the light of God, I’ll fight. I’ll fight to the very end!

- William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army

Knee Polishing

Pray for any family, friends, colleagues, anyone you can think of, who may be in one of the following seasons in their lives. Pray for God's peace, strength, guidance, wisdom.

Sunday: pray for any who may feel far from God, or for whom God feels far from them

Monday: pray for those who experiencing bereavement

Tuesday: pray for people who are out of work or perhaps accustomising themselves to retirement

Wednesday: pray for those who are ill or injured, especially when it is long-term

Thursday: pray for those who have just got married

Friday: pray for any with a new addition to their family

Saturday: pray for those who find themselves in a foreign country or a strange part of their own

A minister said to his congregation, "Next week I'll be preaching about the sin of lying. To prepare, I would like everyone to read Mark chapter 17." The next Sunday, he asked, "Who read Mark 17 as I asked?" Every hand went up into the air. The minister grinned and said, "Mark has only 16 chapters. Let's talk about lying."

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