



Teaching, Modeling, and Imparting Responsiveness to the Holy Spirit for Life and Ministry.

**TEACHING:
Managing the Seasons**

by Mike Flynn

Four weeks ago I noted that the sun was drawing a vertical line on a wall in my bedroom. Since then that line has moved 7" sideways. Soon the sun won't even shine through that window because it will have moved further north on its trek across the equator and towards the tropic of cancer.

Seasons are wonderful inventions by our creative God. What a drag if there were only one season. To be a child forever would be terrible, as would endless summer or a never-ending career or ceaseless pay-days. In fact, seasonableness is the one real constant: "to everything there is a season" Pete Seeger quoted Ecclesiastes back in 1962, adding that we should "Turn, Turn, Turn" frequently.

I'd like to invite you to think about the seasons in your life. First, look at the past. What seasons has the Lord led you through? Can you recall a rough season? How long did it last? How did the Lord get you out of it? What's been the results since then?

Can you recall a blessed season? Why was it blessed? What was so good about it? Has it ended? If so, how did it end? i.e. did you end it or did the Lord end it or did the world somehow end it?

Questions such as these can provide important insight on our journey through life.

Now what about the present? What

season are you in? i.e. in terms of your life-long phases. Are you young? middle-aged? retired? retired so long it doesn't matter? You can also think of this question in terms of spring, summer, fall, and winter. Which season are you in? How's it going?

But what I'm really interested in are your spiritual seasons. The seasons of the Christian annual calendar are a blueprint for each believer's life. So let's take a look at the seasons of the Christian year and see if we can pinpoint where you are.

ADVENT. Means "Coming". Liturgical color: purple, for penitence. Duration: 4 weeks

Significance: Christ is in the process of coming towards one.

Question: Am I preparing myself for the arrival of Christ into my life?

CHRISTMAS. The "Mass of Christ." Color: white, for celebration. Duration: 12 days

Significance: Christ has arrived in one's heart. One is "born again".

Question: Have I accepted Christ into my heart at Savior and Lord?

EPIPHANY. Literally, "the shining upon". The Manifestation of Christ. Color: green, for growth. Duration: varies, depending on when Lent starts. About 7 weeks.

Significance: It is evident to others that Christ is in my life; He is "manifested" through me.

Question: Am I allowing Christ to shine through me to others? Have I just shaken hands with Jesus but not furthered the relationship?

LENT. Means "spring". Color: purple, for penitence. Duration: 40 days plus Sundays

Significance: One is dying to one's own ability to run one's life satisfactorily.

Question: Have I experienced the first collapse? i.e., Have I been convinced that I have not done right? Related Q's: Have I let the Lord thoroughly examine my life in order to clean out all the debris?

EASTER. The resurrection of Jesus Christ. Color: white, for celebration. Duration: 50 days.

Significance: Sin and Death are conquered; new life is an option for all.

Question: Have I let Jesus raise me out of that first collapse? Have I died to self and allowed Jesus to resurrect me to new life? Have I forgiven myself? Have I appropriated the new life He makes available for me or am I still stuck in Lent, brow-beating and berating myself for my sins and failures?

PENTECOST. Means "50th day". Originally the 50th day after the Passover.

Color: red, for the fire of the Holy Spirit. Then green, for personal growth.

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FreshWind Ministries

4406 El Corazon Ct.
Camarillo, CA 93012
805-383-1269
mkfln@aol.com
www.freshwindministries.org

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gbatham@yahoo.com

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Duration: the rest of the church year (i.e. late November)

Significance: the Power of the Holy Spirit is made available to God's people for power and holiness, gifts and fruit.

Question: The first collapse was "I have not done right." The second collapse is "I cannot do right." Have I allowed Jesus to fill me with the Holy Spirit so that I have the power to live as He wants me to? This has 2 applications.

1. The first is for you. It is receiving the power to make a personality change.

The fruit of the Spirit.

"Without Me you can do nothing," Jesus said. Have you reckoned on that?

2. The second application of Pentecost is for others.

The Gifts of the Spirit.

It is the ability to do things for others that exceed your natural human capabilities.

It is an attitude of servanthood for others.

It is living out Jesus' advice that if you lose your life for others you will gain it.

It is the ability to translate the attitude of servanthood into profitable service to others by the power of the Spirit.

In conclusion: the question is: "What season are you in?" How long have you been in that season? Has that season worked its full benefit in you? Are you ready to go on to the next season, the next stage in your life with God?

Or has your Mom been pregnant with you for 20 or 50 years? Isn't it time to burst out and get born? Isn't it time to get out of the prison of Advent?

Are you the kind of Christian who hasn't blown your cover? Then Epiphany is waiting for you. Let someone see that there's a difference in you.

Do you have a problem you haven't been able to beat? I think Good Friday is lurking just around the corner for you. It's time for you to die to your ability to run your own life.

Or maybe you've been in Lent for decades--always penitential, always sorry but never getting any triumph over your sins or your sorrows. Easter is ready to lift you up into a whole new level of being.

Or have you gone half way through the Christian life and need something more?

You've sniffed around this Jesus guy--i.e. you've had Advent

You've invited Him into your heart -- i.e. you've done Christmas

You've told others of the change in you -- i.e. you've shown some Epiphany

You've gotten rid of self in order to take on more of Jesus -- i.e. you've had Lent

You've died to your ability to run your life -- i.e. you've experienced Good Friday

You've been raised into new and joyful life -- i.e. you've enjoyed Easter

But you don't yet have the power to serve God and others as effectively as you'd like. Which is to say: you need Pentecost. Pentecost is ordination of the laity.

In a liturgical church you've had a bishop lay hands on you--that's the menu. But did you get the power--have you had the meal?

Or did you get the power 25 years ago but you've sort of drifted away from it?

“Light the Fire Again”
by Brian Doerksen

Don't let my love grow cold
I'm calling out, light the fire again
Don't let my vision die
I'm calling out, light the fire again

You know my heart, my deeds
I'm calling out, light the fire again
I need your discipline
I'm calling out, light the fire again

I am here to buy gold
Refined in the fire
Naked and poor
Wretched and blind I come
Clothe me in white
So I won't be ashamed
Lord, light the fire again

The Church Year is the menu, but it is not the meal. The menu is going to church and observing the changes in color etc. etc. But the meal is living out what each season means in real life. Many of you have observed the Christian year many times.

For you, as we begin a new spring, will you let the Lord take you to new heights as you go through each season once more?

If you're in Epiphany: in what new or deeper ways might Jesus be interested in manifesting Himself through you? You see, this business with God is a dynamic rather than a static thing. The heart of it is movement. Are you moving on with God?

And don't get hung up on the right sequence.

- I was in Advent for 31 years and then had Christmas and Pentecost at the same time. A month later I had Good Friday, big time!
- I knew a man who had Good Friday on Easter Day once.
- Cornelius and his household in Acts 10 had Pentecost first and then were baptized (Christmas).

Now let me ask a question of you for your congregation. If God were to regard you as a single corporate personality, what season would He say that your church is in?

1. Are you in Advent? Do you as a corporate entity know nothing of Him except that He is coming towards you?
2. Are you in Christmas? Has He been born in your heart as a corporate entity so that you are now inheritors of eternal life?
3. Are you in Epiphany? Is it evident to the city of _____ that God has invaded your lives as a corporate entity?
4. Are you in Lent? Is God trying to get you as a corporate entity to realize that there are things you have done wrong that you need to acknowledge, confess and be forgiven for?
5. Are you in Eastertide? Have you as a corporate entity experienced resurrection to new and vital life with your risen Savior?
6. Are you in Pentecost? Has it become plain to you that you are incapable as a congregation of doing anything right? Has the Spirit of God been allowed to fill you with God's power? Is it evident to you that it takes God's power to do God's work?

The first 6 months of the Christian year are about the life of Jesus Christ.

But they are also about our life by Him and in Him.

The last 6 months of the Christian year are about the life of the Holy Spirit.

But they are also about our life by Him and in Him.

Whatever season you're in: God's Spirit has the plan and the means to move you on.

Memorial

A donation was made to Fresh-Wind by Cliff and Geraldine Batham in memory of Ronald MacKenzie, may he rest in peace.

Please send us your email address

Because the cost of printing, assembling, and mailing newsletters and brochures for events is rising, we ask that you send us your email address so that we can keep you updated on the things God is having FreshWind do. From now on, all brochures will be sent only to email addresses.

Please include your name with your email address. Send to: mkfln@aol.com. Thanks!

Bits of FreshWind

Feedback

“You may not know it, but you are one of my mentors. I try this stuff out. Today, I was having lunch with a fellow. I felt led to pray this way for him face to face. Suddenly, the Holy Spirit was just there filling our table at the restaurant. It was palpable. He said, “Do you feel the Holy Spirit?” I sure did. Anyway, know that you're on the right track. There's fruit. Gifts are being opened. Opportunities are being seized.” --Jim, H., Denver CO

“I really appreciate your books, your testimony and teaching, your newsletters, and the time you spent with us personally in Camarillo. You are a great example and I plan to make the most of it!” --Bob S., Pleasanton CA

“God blessed us immensely at the two youth events we ministered at over the last week. The Spirit of the Lord moved mightily, touching lives in no ordinary manner. Over 200 youths committed their

lives to Christ in addition to many commitments. a number of other people were delivered from demonic oppression. You should have been there to witness people receive healing, joy and freedom from the bondage of sin.”

--Michael B., Uganda

“I wanted to let you know that at the seminar here in Santa Cruz (Bolivia) held last June, I decided to take the risk and followed your modeling of ‘calling down the Holy Spirit.’ Lo and behold, it worked! Nothing appeared to be happening but I went ahead and asked if anyone sensed anything, etc., and come forward. About 5 persons did. One pastor said he felt heat all through his body. There were many other wonderful manifestations during the week. Praise be to God!”

--Rev. Bob J., Bolivia

“Thank you so very much for your generosity and hospitality to our church. You have sown seeds of equipping and provided tools for which we could never repay you. God will. More than all to the skills is the model you both provided of servanthood and humility, invaluable to these beginning in ministry.”

--Rev. Betty A., Glendale CA

“Thank you very much for your ministry to our men at the retreat this weekend. It was a pivotal time for our church and God used you to bring a lot of guys on the fence into the game.”

--Ray D., Fresno CA

“I attended a seminaaar a year or two ago where you spoke. Yours was the first presentation, that “I’ve heard, of the realities of signs and wonders and spiritual gifting which was really lucid. I’ve been grateful to you every since and often wanted to tell you so.”

--Dale F., Minneapolis MN

Feedback on Mike’s Books

“I was reading your book on Mustard Seed Faith and find it to be AWESOME! Surely inspired by the Holy Spirit! I would love to put together a Bible study based on your book.”

--Vonnie J., Camarillo CA

“I just finished reading your book again (How To Be Good). The first time I read it about 2 years ago I enjoyed it, but this time it really spoke to my heart. I have never written to an author before but I wanted you to know that I really appreciated the fact that you made known your denominational affiliation. It makes me appreciate the fact that God uses all of us to bless others even when they don’t necessarily agree with us on all points. Finally, in the section “Collaborating with Jesus” I found myself at step four. I’ve been there for a while, sort of in a holding pattern and not understanding what the problem was. Thanks for the insight.

I believe God is going to take me to a new place in Him.”

--Sheila M., Kentucky

“We never thought that your book How To Be Good would have such an impact on our lives. We used your chapter on ‘Give’ as a Bible study & from then on it’s been miracle after miracle.”

--Ken & Mary M., San Bernardino CA.

Healing Course Phase II

The second phase of our healing course will take place in Camarillo Ca May 15-17. The cost is \$40 per person. For more information, please email us at mkfln@aol.com and we’ll send you a pdf brochure. The event is open to persons who have some experience in healing prayer.



Mike’s Book Deal: 40% off

For a limited time--until June 30, 2008 and only by email order-- Mike’s books will be sold at a 40% discount. This means that the price for each is as follows:

Holy Vulnerability, \$7.20 (Calif. residents \$8.40, including sales tax)

Inner Healing, \$9.00 (Calif. residents \$9.65)

Mustard Seed Book, \$6.60 (Calif. residents \$7.10)

Making Disciples, \$3.00 (Calif. residents \$3.25)

How To Be Good Without Really Trying, \$7.80 (Calif. residents \$8.40)

All 5 books, \$33.60 (Calif. residents \$36.80)

Submit order to tizsue@aol.com.

We will ship the book/s to you including an invoice for handling and postage.

Responses

FreshWind often donates its time and energy to foreign and domestic churches and organizations that cannot afford to pay normal honoraria and travel expenses. Many of these are missions-focused, as is FreshWind.

About 75% of FreshWind's budget comes from people like you who believe in and feel led to support what we're doing to extend the kingdom.

Here's the bottom line:

+ renewed, disciplined, and anointed people produce ministry and mission

+ FreshWind produces renewed, disciplined and anointed followers

We ask you to help us "produce" FreshWind.

We highly value all forms of aid: prayer, finances, and ministry team participation. Please look over this response form and see if the Lord would speak to you about your support of this ministry.

PRAYER:

If you would like to receive Mike's monthly Intercessor's letter and pray regularly for this ministry, please log onto www.freshwindministries.org and click on the "Contact" heading. In the box for questions or comments, please state you'd like to receive the letter.

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+ I/we pledge: \$_____ per month for the support of FreshWind Ministries. I understand that FreshWind is a 501(c) (3) religious non-profit corporation and that I will receive regular IRS-approved statements for tax deduction purposes.

+ I do not feel that the Lord is leading me to pledge regularly at this time, but I want to send a one-time gift of \$_____.

Please make contribution checks to FreshWind Ministries. Thank you.

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Happy Easter from Mike & Sue