

## THE CHANGING SEASONS OF LIFE

### Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

INTRODUCTION: Our theme for today's message comes from Ecclesiastes 3:1. As we look around us we realize how few things in this life are permanent. Life constantly presents us with changes and with challenges. Just about the time we think we have our lives in order, something else happens and our season of life has changed because of something we have lost. Today we will look at the reasons for life losses and also the responses to life losses. Ecclesiastes 8:14. When bad things happen to good people we always want to know why.

#### I. THE REASONS FOR LIFE'S LOSSES!

Why is it that all of us go through seasons of loss in our lives? First of all it is because we live in a fallen world. Sometimes things happen to us just because we live in this fallen world. When sin entered our world it set off a chain reaction of sowing and reaping. Sometimes we suffer loss because of what someone else has sown. Second we live in a world where we have choices. Because we have the freedom of choice God's perfect will is not always done: Matthew 6:10. We must not blame God when He allows bad things to happen to us and we dare not take all the credit when good things happen to us.

#### II. OUR RESPONSES TO LIFE'S LOSSES!

We have seen the reasons for life's losses now let's look at the responses to life's losses. None of us has all the answers as to why life has so many losses: 1 Corinthians 13:12. Since we know we are going to suffer losses in this life how can we best respond to them? Matthew 5:4. We must learn how to deal with our grief and not just suppress it. God does understand our pain and it is ok to cry and it is ok to ask "Why?" Psalm 62:8; Psalm 34:17-18. We must draw strength from others: Galatians 6:2; Hebrews 12:15; James 5:13-16; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4. When we are hurting from life's losses we need others to help us through our grief. When we suffer losses we must not become bitter in our hearts: Job 21:25. Happiness is a choice and so is a spirit of bitterness. Hebrews 12:15. We as Christians do grieve we just don't grieve like those who have no hope: 1 Thessalonians 4:13; Romans 5:13.

#### III. HOW DO WE DECIDE AGAINST BITTERNESS?

We must learn to accept the things we cannot change. We need to learn to focus on what is left, not on what was lost: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. We must focus on what is left. We must determine what is really important: Matthew 6:25; 1 Timothy 6:6-8. We must learn to depend on Christ. Philippians 4:11-13. Faith is believing in Jesus Christ in spite of my loss! Need an example? Job 1:20-22; Job 13:15. We must depend on Christ for our stability: Isaiah 26:3-4; Isaiah 33:6. We must depend on Christ for our strength to carry on: Psalm 46:1-3. We must continue to trust in Christ for our salvation: Mark 4:38. The key to crisis control in your life is Christ control of your life!