

# Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church



## Weekly Sermon Series

### **Seasons of Discipleship... Through the Seasons of Life Psalm 1:1–6; Ecclesiastes 3:1–8**

Life seems to often follow a spiraling circular pattern. There are ups and downs. There are jubilations and celebrations. There are struggles and challenges. There are quiet stretches and there are crazy running-in-circles overextended periods. We often measure life by linear terms—dates of birth, school semesters, graduations, calendars, decades, and so on. But the spirit of life and the emotional flow of life are not necessarily orderly or chronological. Those aspects of life fluctuate with events.

As we seek to understand our religious or spiritual life, it, too, seems to have seasons of its own which are not necessarily a continuous stepping stone of upward climbing, even though knowledge and wisdom are gained with advancing years.

In looking back at my own life, I recall an incident, at about nine years of age, when I was outside on our farm doing my summer chores. Suddenly I had an inner desire to speak aloud to God, and I prayed in earnest about my life and

the lives of my immediate family and friends. I remember the words flowed freely, and the thoughts were more adult than child.

I remember other times, at age 12 and 13 and again at age 45, when I was struggling to understand just who I was and what the purpose was for my life. I remember asking to teach summer Bible School in 6th grade and took very seriously the responsibility of being prepared to tell the young children stories of the Bible that were part of the curriculum. As a young mom, I was often a leader of children and adults in Bible Study. Other times I was simply a student myself. Again, in retirement, I delight in such.

I remember times of being very close to my Lord in prayer and thought, and other times feeling that I had walked distantly from him. Thus, I see various cycles in my Christian walk, not always following in orderly steps. Listening to God as God calls us to various opportunities is an important aspect of our life. When we are ripe to learn something new, we must be open to that. When we are ripe to reach out to others, we must be open to that. When we are in need of a quiet, inner reflective period, that must be our path.

What periods do you recall of...

- Reaching out and planting God's seeds?
- Taking seriously studying God's Word and growing in knowledge?
- Bearing fruit?
- Quiet reflection?

Lord, help us trust you to guide us and inspire us through your Holy Spirit to do your will, whether it be a time for sharing, for growing, for producing, for quiet reflection. Help us know you are present at all times. Amen.

-- Week of February 22, 2009