

MAXIMIZING SEASONS OF YOUR LIFE PRT 1

Joshua 3:1 Early in the morning Joshua and all the Israelites set out from Shittim and went to the Jordan, where they camped before crossing over. 2 After three days the officers went throughout the camp, 3 giving orders to the people: "When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the Levitical priests carrying it, you are to move out from your positions and follow it. 4 Then you will know which way to go, since you have never been this way before. But keep a distance of about two thousand cubits between you and the ark; do not go near it."

- From the beginning of time, God put in a place a system that operates in cycles. These cycles can also be termed seasons of life.
- Just look around and you will discover that there is a tempo and pace with which life happens.
 - There is 12 hours of light and 12 hours of darkness.
 - There are 24hrs to a day, right.
 - There are 365 days to a year and at the end of every 365 days, another year begins.
 - There is summer, at the end of summer, there is autumn, at the end of autumn, there is winter, at the end of winter, there is spring, and you come back again to summer.
 - Your own life is made up of seasons.
- Why am I talking about seasons; it is because every season presents to you opportunities and threats, and you need to know what to do to maximize the seasons of life.
- This morning, I want to kickstart a four-part series that will prepare us for the coming season and it is titled **MAXIMIZING THE SEASONS OF YOUR LIFE**.
- Many people live in the realm of regret because at some point they failed to maximize a season. Your 2024 could have been way better had you mastered the art of maximizing different seasons.
- When God opens a door for you into business, you need to know how to maximize the season, when you are in church, you need to know how to maximize the seasons.
- We are right at the end of a season called 2024 and on the doorstep of 2025. The question you need to answer is how you are going to maximize the coming seasons of life.

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- For forty years, Israel was wandering in the Sinai desert and where we read, they were about to change location from the desert and to enter the promised land.
- Forty years is a long time to be in one location. It is so long that it grows on you, and you start adapting your lifestyle to make your stay comfortable. You start adopting the ways of the land to fit in with the system. It takes something special to move you from one season to another.
- You see, the promise had been long time coming and the generation that received the promise had died in the desert and this was a totally new generation.
- The generation that died in the desert had experienced a similar season when God told them to enter the promised land.
- That generation failed to maximize their season, and they aborted the season.
- In Numbers 13, Moses sent 12 spies to explore the land in preparation for its possession. When they got back, 10 of the spies gave a bad report:

Numbers 13: 31 But the men who had gone up with him said, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are." 32 And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, "The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. 33 We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them."

- The report scared the people, resulting in them refusing to enter the promised land. They shouted at Moses and did not believe that God was able to give them victory over the inhabitants of the land.
- The result was that God got angry with them and the promise was delayed.

Numbers 14: 21 Nevertheless, as surely as I live and as surely as the glory of the Lord fills the whole earth, 22 not one of those who saw my glory and the signs I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness but who disobeyed me and tested me ten times— 23 not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their ancestors. No one who has treated me with contempt will ever see it.

- A small act of disobedient resulted in forty years of hardship in the desert, until that generation had perished.
- To deal with something with contempt means to have a strong feeling of dislike and no respect for the thing. This is how that generation responded to the season that was before them.

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- Now, what was this current generation going to do differently to maximize the season that was standing before them.
- This is what we are going to explore, and I believe there are things to be done to maximize the seasons of your life.
- To maximize any season that God brings in your life, you need to understand what season it is For and respond appropriately. You cannot maximize a season that you have not recognized.

1. Develop the understanding of times and seasons (spiritual discernment).

- This was the difference between the generation that died in the desert and the generation of Joshua.
- When Joshua instructed them to move, they moved without a question – they discerned that it was time to possess the land regardless of what stood before them. (You remember last week I said time is not time, until time is time).
- Discernment is the faculty of spiritual perception that enables you to understand God's will for you.
- A discerning person is one who has trained his spiritual senses to detect spiritual impulses.
- Spiritual discernment involves the use of your spiritual senses to accurately read motives, character and behaviors. When you have discernment, you won't be gullible.
- This is different from the gift of discerning of spirits, which has to do with identifying the spiritual source of a behavior. Some behaviors are good but will be coming from a demon.
- To discern is to know what God is doing on one hand and on the other hand it is to know what the kingdom of darkness is doing as well.
- The strength of your discernment is a measure of your spiritual maturity (more about this in the following weeks).

Hebrews 5:14 (AMPC) But solid food is for full-grown men, for those whose senses and mental faculties are trained by practice to discriminate and distinguish between what is morally good and noble and what is evil and contrary either to divine or human law.

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- You can do the right thing but if you do it in the wrong season, your results will either be minimal or disastrous.
- In this world, not everything that is good represents the will of God for you. It takes discernment to know what is really good and to know what is really evil.
- In this world, what is good can be taken as evil.
- The old generation of the Israelites could not understand the times and seasons of God. It was time to enter and possess the promise, but they were too blind in the spirit.
- Spiritual blindness is costly, and many dreams perish on the mountain of spiritual dullness.
- That old generation was devoid of discernment and walked in the flesh. Their feelings were in charge and as a result logic and rationality prevailed over spiritual impulses. Listen to what they said:

Numbers 14:1 That night all the members of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. 2 All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, "If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this wilderness! 3 Why is the Lord bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt?" 4 And they said to each other, "We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt."

- They listened to the bad report and the facts indicated that they stood no chance against the giants of the land.
- Each time you are driven by physical senses and your reason and logic starts overpowering discernment, then you know that you are headed for disaster.
- We have a generation that goes with logic more than with the spirit of God.
- To maximize seasons of life, you must develop your spiritual maturity that will enable you to understand times and seasons.
- Everything under the earth is a function of times and seasons. In other words, when you misinterpret times and seasons, your life will not function the way it should.
- If you do not perceive your planting season, you must not expect a harvest when the harvest season comes.
- The Bible spoke of the tribe of Issachar, which had a great ability of knowing the times and ways of God.

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1 Chronicles 12:32 (NIV) There were 200 captains of the sons of Issachar. They understood the times and had much understanding of what Israel should do. And all their brothers obeyed them.

- Though they were few, this tribe was key to the success of David and his army. Everyone was under their command because they had spiritual perception.
- They knew how to maximize the seasons that were before them.
- Not only, did they understand the times, but they also knew what Israel needed to do. They knew the strategy that needed to be applied in the season.
- You might perceive a season but to maximize the season, you need to have God's strategy for the season.
- The absence of discernment will plunge a church into chaos.
- If you lack discernment, you will be tossed all over by false teachings. It takes discernment to identify teachings of demons.

1 Timothy 4: 1 Now the Spirit expressly states that in later times some will abandon the faith to follow deceitful spirits and the teachings of demons, 2 influenced by the hypocrisy of liars, whose consciences are seared with a hot iron.

- God, through His Holy Spirit is always speaking but the immature cannot perceive.
- You need to understand that the voice of God only does not stop at His audible voice but rather goes to the extend of using principles and circumstances around you – can you perceive?

Job 33:14 (NIV) 14 For God does speak - now one way, now another - though no one perceives it. 15 In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls on people as they slumber in their beds, 16 he may speak in their ears and terrify them with warnings, 17 to turn them from wrongdoing and keep them from pride, 18 to preserve them from the pit, their lives from perishing by the sword.

- There are dangers you should not have gotten into because God had warned you in a dream.
- Some people went against sound advise and married the wrong guy – it would have saved them from great pain.
- The assignment of God's power is to move you from where you are, into the will of God.

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- It is costly to be dull of discernment, therefore you must train your spirit man to perceive God's move over your life.
- Without discernment, you will receive demonically inspired prophecies. Paul had discernment in Acts 16. For a long time, there was a girl who spoke by a spirit of divination confirming that they were servants of God. It was the truth, but it came from a wrong source. Paul was grieved and he rebuked the spirit to leave.
- The spirit of discernment is a way of life that can be sustained in the life of a believer by partnering with the Holy Spirit.
- Today was just to appetize you to desire spiritual perception. Join me next week online as we explore ways of growing in discernment as a way of maximizing our seasons.