



A TIME FOR CHANGE

By Pastor Matt

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Ecclesiastes, Chapter 3

This week we celebrate the first full week of Lent. We also set our clocks back an hour, and gain more sunlight in the evenings. In many ways, this time of the year beckons us to reclaim our lives in Christ, and the joy and fullness of life that Christ promises us.

I need a lot of sunlight to be happy. One of my hardest times in life, I was blessed with a south facing office with an entire window of walls that filled my entire office with natural, bright light. I was in what is colloquially known as the Sun Valley, properly known as Yakima Valley, Washington. It is a dry, desert-ish area, with conditions perfect for wineries to flourish, due to the bright sunny days. I feel it was a great blessing to have the sun shine in my office during one of the hardest parts of my career. I would pause in the afternoon, and just bask in the sun, and feel the warmth of it. Whether just in my head, or truly a blessing from God, I would imagine I was being held by the Spirit in those times, and let my frustrations go.

Indeed, the cycles of the earth have profound impacts on us. Seasonal Affective Disorder is a very real condition impacting millions. With the change of the season, the spring equinox coming in later this month, the changing of the clocks this first week of March, those impacted often begin to feel a shift in their condition this month.

This fits well with the beginning of Lent. A period of 40 days of intentional dedication to God, growing in our relationship with the Lord. I preached the last Sunday in February on the practice of Lent, and I hope you had an opportunity to hear that sermon. If not, it is still available on our webpage and facebook page, for you to review. But this time gives me great hope, it fills me with positivity, it fills me with a new energy.

For me, the systemic intentionality of growing in faith can be a truly inspiring event. When we as a community invite the Holy Spirit into our hearts, and into our lives, that surge of grace in us individually also becomes a great surge of the power of the Lord in us corporately. It is palpable. It is just like the energy that the sun gives to us as we emerge from the cold, dark winter.

There are indeed seasons where we retract, but there are also seasons where we expand, and grow. Let's make this a season where we expand a grow, a season where we are surrounded by the love and grace of the Holy Spirit, and the church on the whole is empowered by the grace of God in a new and transformative way. Join us all in experiencing the fullness that Lent, and Spring, together, provide.

Amen,
Pastor Matt