SERMON BASED STUDY GUIDE

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HOW TO GET THROUGH WHAT YOU'RE GOING THROUGH WEEK 3

OPENING & PRAYER:

Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 4 give believers a reason not to give up. Things may look like they are falling apart on the outside, but God is making new life on the inside. Hard times are "small potatoes" compared to the coming good times. What can be seen is temporary; what lasts forever deserves the greater attention.

"Lord, thank You for always being there for us. Please guide us as we study Your word and how it helps us to get through those tough times. We thank You for Your love for us and help. In Jesus' name we pray, amen."

SCRIPTURE:

So we're not giving up. How could we! Even though on the outside it often looks like things are falling apart on us, on the inside, where God is making new life, not a day goes by without his unfolding grace. These hard times are small potatoes compared to the coming good times, the lavish celebration prepared for us. There's far more here than meets the eye. The things we see now are here today, gone tomorrow. But the things we can't see now will last forever. **2 Corinthians 4:16-18 MSG**

To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven:
A time to be born, And a time to die; A time to plant, And a time to pluck what is planted; A time to kill, And a time to heal; A time to break down, And a time to build up; A time to weep, And a time to laugh; A time to mourn, And a time to dance; **Ecclesiastes 3:1-4**

A time to cast away stones, And a time to gather stones; A time to embrace, And a time to refrain from embracing; A time to gain, And a time to lose; A time to keep,And a time to throw away; A time to tear, And a time to sew; A time to keep silence, And a time to speak; A time to love, And a time to hate; A time of war, And a time of peace. **Ecclesiastes 3:5-8**

You have circled this mountain long enough. Now turn north. **Deuteronomy 2:3 MEV**

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled. **2 Corinthians 10:4-6**

GO DEEPER:

Seasons and cycles require different responses. Seasons are divinely controlled by God and designed for preparation and progression. Spring is for sowing and fresh beginnings. Summer brings growth, nurturing, and pruning. Autumn brings harvest and reflection, while winter makes room for rest, evaluation, and preparation. Every season has a purpose, and frustration grows when believers demand a harvest during planting time.

Recognizing the season also protects relationships. Young parents have an opportunity to sow into their children rather than chase freedoms that belong to another stage of life. Marriage, work, parenting, and finances all require attention to the responsibilities

of the present season. Someone else's harvest is no reason for jealousy when the cost of that person's seed remains unseen.

Cycles are different. They are repeated patterns of thinking and behavior that keep producing the same trouble without progress. Israel's wilderness wandering shows how a season can become a cycle. Waiting longer will not fix what requires a changed response. "God will never bless" someone out of a cycle that requires growth.

Breaking a cycle begins with a settled decision to change, even when correction comes through someone close. Thoughts must be brought into obedience to Christ, and spoken words can interrupt destructive thinking. Identifying triggers gets beneath repeated reactions to what starts them. The Holy Spirit supplies strategy and power where personal effort is not enough. Seasons change with time; cycles change as believers allow God to change their thinking and behavior.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. Every Season Has Its Own Work. A sowing season is not a failed harvest season. God gives preparation, growth, reaping, and rest their own place, and each prepares the way for what follows. Recognizing the present season helps believers do its work without demanding results that belong to the next one. **[14:54]**

2. Another Harvest Hides An Earlier Cost. Someone else's visible harvest does not reveal all the seed, labor, and pruning that came before it. Jealousy compares present results while ignoring the different seasons behind them. The body of Christ has no room for resentment over fruit whose cost remains unknown. **[16:38]**

3. Present Responsibilities Deserve Present Attention. Parents with young children have a season for laying foundations that cannot simply be postponed. Work and hobbies need boundaries when they begin taking the time that belongs to family. Receiving that responsibility as an opportunity to sow makes room for a better next season rather than regret over a neglected one. **[18:37]**

4. Repeated Trouble Calls For Honest Examination. A long-running pattern should not automatically be called a tough season. Recurring financial conflict, broken friendships, or familiar reactions call for an honest question about what keeps starting the trouble. Growth begins when believers stop waiting for circumstances alone to change and take responsibility for the behavior within their reach. **[31:55]**

5. The Spirit Helps Confront Entrenched Patterns. Destructive behavior becomes harder to challenge when it is treated as normal. Where a cycle is demonically inspired or motivated, the Holy Spirit's strategy and power are needed rather than confidence in personal effort alone. Deliverance does not remove the need to confront the pattern and change direction. **[41:40]**

LEARNING AND GROWING:

1. What distinguishes a season of preparation from a cycle of repeated trouble? What role do thinking and behavior play in that difference? **[25:45]**

2. Ecclesiastes 3:1–8 describes different times for different activities. Why might someone mistake a planting season for failure, and how could that misunderstanding affect family relationships or financial decisions? **[17:02]**

3. How does bringing thoughts into obedience to Christ go beyond simply saying positive things? What might change when a believer welcomes honest correction rather than defending a familiar reaction? **[37:29]**

4. When have you compared your progress with someone else's results without knowing what those results cost them? What could help you celebrate their good rather than resent it? **[16:38]**

5. Where do you need the Holy Spirit's help to confront a pattern you have begun to accept as normal? What specific help could you ask God for, and how could this group support your next step? **[42:01]**

CLOSING PRAYER:

"Father, thank you for the opportunities to grow in our faith. We will continue to lean on Your Word as we grow to bring people to know you. In Jesus' name we pray, amen."