

When you feel behind

Trust the season you're in and God who customizes the calendar.

Focus:
God's Plan, Envy, God's Timing

Scriptures

Ecclesiastes 3:1
Galatians 6:9
Romans 5:3-4
Acts 3:19-20
John 15:3
Psalm 81:4 TPT
Acts 9:31 TPT
Acts 1:7
Galatians 5:25-26
James 1:4
Ephesians 6:18

Parking lot

Write down distracting thoughts here:



Settle in

Take a deep breath. Turn off notifications on your phone. Tell God about any areas where you feel behind in life. Ask him to help you trust his timing.



Thought starter

Read Ecclesiastes 3:1 slowly. Read it again and let it sink in.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 ERV

There is a right time for everything, and everything on earth will happen at the right time.

Every single day, our phones bombard us with images of people who seem to be winning at life. You scroll through TikTok or Instagram and see someone your age who seems way beyond you—maybe they are starting a business, getting a full-ride scholarship, hitting the perfect gym goals, or just looking like they have their entire life figured out.

It's easy to feel the sting of FOMO, envy, and anxiety. That's because society is handing us an invisible checklist:

- Get the best grades.
- Pick the perfect major or career immediately.
- Be in the perfect friend group.
- Get a boyfriend or girlfriend.
- Get married.
- Have a baby.
- Buy a house.
- Look flawless while doing it.



When we see others hitting those milestones while we are struggling just to get through the week, we start feeling behind. We start playing the dangerous "Compete and Compare" game. We think: If I'm going at a slower pace, I'm not worthy. I'm less than other people.

But here is the truth bomb: Our lives are not a race, and we are not running late.

We aren't operating on society's clock; we are operating on God's. He doesn't look at our lives in rigid "stages" of success. He looks at our lives in seasons.

Here's what we'll learn in this Quick Quiet Time:



View on web ↗

Notes:

- Our seasons aren't random. God has a plan and purpose for each one.
- God's calendar is customized, which is why we can drop the "compete and compare" game.
- We can't change the weather, but we can change our response.

 The Timing: All seasons of life have a purpose.
Galatians 6:9 NIV

Let us not become weary in doing good, **for at the proper time we will reap a harvest** if we do not give up.

Romans 5:3-4 Voice

And that's not all. We also celebrate in **seasons of suffering** because we know that when we suffer **we develop endurance**, which shapes our characters. When our characters are refined, we learn what it means to hope and anticipate **God's goodness**.

Acts 3:19-20 CSB

Therefore repent and turn back, so that your sins may be wiped out, [20] that **seasons of refreshing** may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send Jesus, who has been appointed for you as the Messiah.

John 15:3 TLB

"He has already tended you by pruning you back for greater strength and usefulness by means of the commands I gave you."

Psalms 81:4 TPT

For God has given us these seasons of joy, days that the God of Jacob decreed for us to celebrate and rejoice.

Acts 9:31 TPT

After this, the church all over Judea, Galilee, and Samaria experienced a season of peace. The congregations grew larger and larger, with the believers being empowered and encouraged by the Holy Spirit. They worshiped God in wonder and awe, and walked in the fear of the Lord.

 **Truth bomb:** We can't force a harvest when it's only time to plant seeds.

If we try to rush a tree to grow fruit in the middle of winter, it won't work. Rushing things just leads to frustration.

Notes:

Just as plants grow and change through natural seasons, the Bible shows us that God uses different spiritual seasons to grow us. Here are a few seasons we go through in our spiritual lives:

- Seasons of growth: When everything feels good and we are moving forward.
- Seasons of pruning: When God removes things or people from our lives to make room for better things later.
- Seasons of winter: When everything feels cold, quiet, and lonely.

 Metaphor moment:

Winter brings stronger roots. Spring brings life. Summer brings joy. Fall brings change. Right now, you might be in a hidden "winter" season. It feels like nothing is happening, but underneath the surface, God is building the deep roots you will need to survive the big blessings coming in your future. A painful winter is preparation, not punishment.

Quick takeaway:

God never wastes a difficult season. Don't judge the season by how it feels. Judge it by what it's forming.

 The Trap: Why we need to drop society's stopwatch
Acts 1:7 CEB

Jesus replied, "**It isn't for you to know the times or seasons** that the Father has set by his own authority."

Galatians 5:25-26 MSG

Since this is the kind of life we have chosen, the life of the Spirit, let us make sure that we do not just hold it as an idea in our heads or a sentiment in our hearts, but work out its implications in every detail of our lives. That means we will not compare ourselves with each other as if one of us were better and another worse. We have far more interesting things to do with our lives. Each of us is an original.

 ***Truth bomb:** God has a customized calendar for us.

- When we realize God has a customized calendar just for us, the comparison game completely breaks down.
- Our friend's timeline has nothing to do with ours. We don't need to envy someone else's summer plans when God is using our winter to make us stronger.

 Nerd note:

In the original language of the New Testament, there are two different words for time:

- **Chronos:** This is clock time—seconds, minutes, deadlines, and school schedules.
- **Kairos:** This means an appointed, strategic, God-timed window. Kairos is used to describe the best time to do something, like feeling out the perfect time to release an arrow so it hits the target with the perfect amount of force. Kairos means that God has the skill and understanding to time something perfectly.

Notes:

- Society runs on chronos (deadlines and age limits). God runs on kairos (the perfect, strategic moment).

Quick takeaway:

We are not behind. We are not ahead. We are right on God's calendar. Trees don't compete with the trees next to them; they just grow when it's time.

**The Move: Change our response, not the weather.****James 1:4 MSG**

...don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed..."

Ephesians 6:18 AMPC

Pray at all times (on every occasion, in **every season**) in the Spirit, with all [manner of] prayer ...



*** Truth bomb:** Our job isn't to change the weather. It's to change how we handle it.

- When rain ruins our weekend plans, we can't scream at the sky and make the rain stop. We can't force winter to become summer.
- But we can choose to pray in every season of our lives.

**Metaphor moment:**

Umbrellas don't stop the rain, but they keep us dry while we walk through it. Prayer and trust are our umbrellas. Instead of exhausting ourselves trying to force our lives to move faster, we can lean into God today. We can ask him what he wants us to learn right now.

Quick takeaway:

We can't rush a season, but we can ruin one by resisting it and complaining instead of praying.

**Real talk reflection**

Take a second to be honest with yourself:

- What season am I actually in right now? (Is it a season of waiting? a season of hard work? a season of healing? a season of planning?)
- Where am I letting FOMO or envy steal my peace?
- How can I stop watching everyone else's stopwatch and trust God's calendar today?

**For further study on envy****Psalms 37:1 CEV**

Don't be annoyed by anyone who does wrong, and don't envy them.

Notes:

Psalm 37:8 TPT

Stay away from anger and revenge. Keep envy far from you, for it only leads you into lies.

Psalm 73:2-3 NCV

But I had almost stopped believing; I had almost lost my faith [3] because I was jealous of proud people. I saw wicked people doing well.

Psalm 119:36 AMP

Incline my heart to Your testimonies And not to dishonest gain and envy.

Proverbs 14:30 AMP

A calm and peaceful and tranquil heart is life and health to the body, but passion and envy are like rottenness to the bones.

Proverbs 23:17 CSB

Don't let your heart envy sinners; instead, always fear the LORD.

Mark 15:10 AMP

For he was aware that the chief priests had turned Jesus over to him because of envy and resentment.

Acts 8:23 GNT

"For I see that you are full of bitter envy and are a prisoner of sin."

Acts 13:45 ERV

When the Jews there saw all these people, they became very jealous. Shouting insults, they argued against everything Paul said.

Romans 1:29 AMP

... until they were filled (permeated, saturated) with every kind of unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice and mean-spiritedness. They are gossips [spreading rumors] ...

Notes:

1 Corinthians 13:4 CSB

Love is patient, love is kind. Love does not envy, is not boastful, is not arrogant ...

Galatians 5:26 AMP

We must not become conceited, challenging or provoking one another, envying one another.

Philippians 1:15 AMP

Some, it is true, are [actually] preaching Christ out of envy and rivalry [toward me—for no better reason than a competitive spirit or misguided ambition], but others out of goodwill and a loyal spirit [toward me].

James 3:16 CSB

For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there is disorder and every evil practice.

1 Peter 2:1 ERV

So then, stop doing anything to hurt others. Don't lie anymore, and stop trying to fool people. Don't be jealous or say bad things about others.

Final thoughts

Life's weather changes daily. God does not. He is just as faithful in the lonely, freezing blizzard as he is in the bright sunshine. We are exactly where we need to be, and we can trust his calendar because we trust him.

**Humor break!**

What did the tree say when spring arrived?

A: What a re-leaf!

Share the inspiration!

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