



# *LAW #1 - LAW OF SEASONS*

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4 Biblical Laws | January, 2018

Well, um, here's what it's gonna be. It's gonna be a four-part series. Uh, today is the first of four. We're gonna deal with four laws. Today, we're gonna deal with, uh, the Law of Seasons, the Law of the Seasons. Uh, the next lecture will be on, um, the Law of Planning. And so today my goal is to help you understand what season of life you're in, and also how an annual year works in a seasonal format. Then the next time we'll meet, I'll talk about, uh, putting together a life plan, how to put together an entire constitution for your life and your family. Many of you have that for your business, but you don't have that for your family. And imagine how decision making would go in our country if we didn't have a constitution. You need a constitution for your life and family to help govern the decisions that you make as a family. The the third lecture will ultimately be on the law of wise counsel. How do you seek out wise counsel, people who know things that you don't, so that you can improve the quality of your life and your family if you're a husband or father or grandfather. And then, uh, lastly, the fourth talk will be on the principle of knowing God's will when you need to make a decision. How do you know whether or not you're in God's will? And, and, and the hope is together to help you understand how to see life, how to plan for life, how to pivot and adjust when change is necessary, and to walk confidently knowing that you're in God's will. So this will be the first of four, and I'll pray and we'll get to work. Father, thank you for an opportunity to, uh, to teach and to hopefully help and serve in a real practical way. Lord, I confess that, uh, growing up, I didn't have a home in which, uh, we did a lot of planning. My, my folks worked so very hard. Um, but there really wasn't a, a put together plan for our, our life and for our, our annual calendar. And Lord God, I, I confess that I've made a lot of mistakes. I, I overworked, I've been unhealthy. Um, physically, I've completely exhausted and drained myself at certain seasons. I've overextended my wife, um, and, and, and Lord, at times I, I was working in my life, but I wasn't working on my life. And as a result, I was pouring myself out, but I wasn't seeing a, a tremendous return on investment. So would you give us all wisdom tonight, Lord, to, to stop thinking about working in our life for just a little bit and to pull back and to take a look at our life so that we could work on our life, uh, the life that you've given us in Jesus? Good name, amen. Well, the, the first law is the law of the seasons. And I'll start with a little bit of a, a story. Um, some years ago I was traveling to speak, and I think I was in California. I'm getting old, so I forget stuff, but I think I was in California. And then we had a trip like to Illinois, like Peoria, Illinois, and it was the middle of the winter, and there was a buddy of mine, he was traveling with me. And so we landed, I think it was in California, and he had flip flops on and had a good time, and we're hanging out and speaking and doing stuff, and then we get on a plane and go to Illinois. And I didn't think anything of it. I thought, well, he's keeping his flip flops on because you know, it's more comfortable to travel. And then we landed in Illinois and went to the rental car, and there was just a complete blizzard just snowed in. Unbelievable. And I thought, well, for sure this guy's gonna throw some boots on, or shoes or something. And I look at him, I'm like, uh, you can throw some shoes on before we go out in the blizzard. He is like, I, I forgot, man, I only packed flip flops. I was like, we're, we're literally driving from the Chicago airport to Peoria, Illinois in the middle of the night in an absolute blizzard, and he's in flip flops. I'm like, all right. And so we jump in the car, we finally get to the hotel, and the hotel is absolutely packed. So we're parked way out in the back 40. And, uh, the snowplows had come through, and we literally had to climb over a snowbank and do a fairly decent hike, you know, in a massive stormy headwind of snow. And here's my buddy in flip flops, man. He is, he's hiking a snow mountain in flip flops. And I look over him, I go, how's it going, bro? He's like, not good at all. It's not going good at all. By the time we got into the, uh, lobby, his feet were blue. They were frozen solid. And, and it's the principle of the seasons. He, he didn't honor the principle of the season. The principle of the season is seasons change and they don't change for you. You need to change for them. Amen. Amen. He wasn't gonna change the weather with his footwear. He needed to adjust to reality. And the same God who made the physical world, made the spiritual world. And so a lot of the principles that govern the physical world, they also apply to the spiritual world. And one is the law of the seasons. And that is two things that life has seasons. And you need to know what season you're in. And secondly, every year of your life has its own seasons. And so there are these two concepts of seasons that converge on each other. And that's what I wanna talk about, um, today. And you have to understand the seasons. You have to anticipate the seasons. You have to prepare for the seasons. Any of you who grew up in agriculture, any of you who are

in farming, any of you who grew up in acclimate weather, you know that you need to be prepared when the seasons change. Because if you're not, you will suffer. And the same is true spiritually. So let me, let me share it with you from Ecclesiastes three. This is a pretty well-known section of scripture. And it's one of the few portions of scripture that actually was a billboard top 10 hit for all you old guys. You remember this one? This was sort of a hippie anthem for a while. For everything. There is a what? There's a season. So you think of life in terms of seasons, and here's why this is important. Sometimes you'll say, well, I, this is what I did, and it worked, and then I did it and it didn't work anymore. You know, why? Different season, different season. Sometimes people get to the point where they say, well, this works and this works and this works. And now it doesn't work anymore. It's 'cause the season shifted. And you need to know what season it is. There's a season and a time for every matter under heaven. He goes through a list, a time to be born, and a time to die. He's talking about the seasons of your life. A time to plant, a time to pluck up what is planted. He's talking about seasons of your year. We're gonna talk about both a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to break down, a time to build up, right? A time to start your company, a time to shut it down, a time to weep and a time to laugh. There are seasons where you're gonna be crying a lot. There are seasons where you're gonna be laughing a lot, a time to mourn and a time to dance. A time when we throw a funeral and a time when we throw a party. And those seasons are different. A time to cast away stones and a time to gather stones together. You send out your investments and they come back, you send out your children, and sometimes they come back. Amen. Um, that, that sometimes we're, we're casting out. Sometimes we're gathering in a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing, you're my friend, I love you. I trust you. You know what? Things have changed. This relationship has come to an end. And we need to park company at this point. Uh, a time to seek and a time to lose, a time to keep, and a time to cast away, a time to tear, and a time to. So a time to keep silent and a time to speak. You know what? I need to speak up and say something. You know what? I'm just gonna let it go. And now's not the time for me to speak. It's the time for me to listen. A time to love and a time to hate, right? This is a time where you embrace someone versus rejecting someone is really what he's talking about. Um, I care for you, but you're not safe. And our relationship will no longer be intimate and close because it is now an unsafe relationship, a time for war and a time for peace. And the big idea is this, that life has seasons and every year has a season, and you need to know what season of life you're in and what season of year you're in. So then you can start to make wise decisions without this. Here's what oftentimes happens. People will come and they'll want advice or counsel, how do I do this? What decisions do I make? Where should I go? How should it be? And the question is, well, what season is it? Well, should I sow or should I reap? Well, is it winter? Is it spring? Is it summer? Is it fall? Those seasons dictate what you should be doing and not doing. And so it is with the seasons of life. And so what I wanna do is, uh, also talk about not just the seasons of life, but the, the annual seasons Each year has seasons. Some of you older men, you've started to see these cycles, right? Some of you younger men are just learning in business school year with kids, um, practical matters of life. That, that there is a rhythm to it. And you're trying to get your heart and your mind around it. And he, he talks about this in Psalm one, one through three. Blessed is the man who walks not on the council of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers. That's the guy who makes fun of everybody. He's the mocker. And you'll notice the pattern. It starts by your walking with people. You shouldn't be walking with friends and relationships. You're walking places that you shouldn't be. Next thing you know, you're not walking. You've stopped to observe what is sinful or rebellious or foolish or dangerous. Next thing you know, you're sitting down and participating, right? And that's what he's saying. If you're walking with the wrong people and you're walking in the wrong places, eventually you'll stop to be looking at the wrong things and you'll be sitting participating in that which you shouldn't even be in the presence of. And so he says, that's the foolish person. That's the person who lives their life in a rebellious way. Well, what about the option? Um, the wise man, his delight is in the law of the Lord. So he, you know, loves the scriptures. He heeds and reads the word of God. Um, delights in the law of the Lord. And on his law, he meditates day and night. He's trying to figure out what God's word is and says for him to be and do. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in and season. And his leaf does not wither in all that he does. He prospers. So what he's saying is, for you to flourish, for you to prosper, for you to be healthy, for you to be fruitful

for your life, to be life giving, for your life to be healthy, think of a tree. A tree needs two things. It needs to find a stream, right? It needs to be rooted in where there is life giving fresh water. So for us, it would be, you know, a church home. It would be picking a, a good career path. It would be choosing a company to work for. If you're single, it's choosing a godly woman, okay? Right? A life-giving place for your life to be nourished so that you can grow healthy and fruitful. And the other thing he says you need is not just life-giving people in presence, but also you need to dig your roots in. And sometimes people aren't fruitful because they don't root in anywhere. They go from, A single guy will go from this relationship to this relationship, to this relationship, to this relationship. Never roots in with any woman. Someone else will go from this job, to this job, to this job, to this job, to this job. They never root in. They go from this church to this church, to this church, to this church. And they never root in. So it's firstly, it's firstly understanding where is their life giving resources like water for a tree. Secondly, am I rooted in, am I invested? Am I involved? And without a healthy root system and a nourishing life source, it can't be a fruitful tree. That's what he's saying. And God wants his people to be fruitful, wants them to be fruitful in season. And what this means is a healthy tree will have buds in this season, leaves in this season, they'll change color in this season. They'll fall to the ground in this season, and then the cycle will repeat itself. So health looks like annual seasonal cycles. It's the law. It's the law of seasons. So let me, let me ask you this question. What, uh, what season are you in? Uh, I was thinking about it. We all go through seasons of life. First one, you're, you're a baby, right? You're born, your parents tend to you care for, you can't really communicate other than crying or screaming. And they have to interpret what that data might be. You become a child. Now you can feed yourself, maybe dress yourself. You start to get a few chores, a little bit of responsibility. You're still under the jurisdiction of your parents. You become a young adult. Now you're in your teen years, you've got a driver's license, but you still live at home, right? You're off to school and work, but you still are a minor and under the legal, custodial oversight of your parents. So you're somewhere between that dependence of a child and that independence of a young adult. You are in that transition season where you're taking on more responsibility, then you become an adult worker. This is like young, urban professional. You've graduated from college, you've started your career, you've got your condominium, your first house. You're sort of putting your life together. You're no longer at your parents' address, and they're no longer paying your bills, right? Some of you that are a little older, you know what this is like, you finally get your kids off the payroll, right? So you go pay your home bills and figure this out. Um, then you get married. Up until this point, your parents were responsible for you. And then you became responsible for yourself, and now you're responsible for somebody else. So your responsibilities have increased, and the complexity of your life has increased. Well, next thing you know, you have a baby. You're pregnant. Now you've gotten only yourself and your spouse, but now a child. And like, I've got five kids. So the amount of responsibility, the lines of communication, the cost, the complexity, trying to get schedules together. So we've got three boys that are baseball players. I mean, a couple years ago, I tallied it up, they had more games combined than a major league team, and none of 'em had a driver's license. So my wife and I ran a cab company. It was basically what we did just shot. And my daughter was running track, and my other daughter was in music. And, and life was very crazy and chaotic. And that's that parenting years where when the kids are little, it's a lot of physical energy just to care for them. When they get older, it becomes a lot of emotional energy in driving them around. Well then eventually you're an empty nester. Your kids have graduated or gone off to college, they've gotten married, they've moved out, and all of a sudden you, you're like, we don't, we don't have a lot on the schedule anymore. We don't have all the school stuff, all the sports stuff, the back to school, and the holidays and the school breaks. All of those seasons have shifted. And our year looks very, very different. And our day looks very, very different. This is where a couple that really works on their friendship, these are good years. Or they can be, um, I've talked to some godly older couples and they say, man, the kids left. It was like we were dating again. Like, we could go out, we could hang out, we could go on vacation. We had disposable income. You know, the kids weren't around. It was just, it was awesome. It was just the two of us. I mean, we love the kids, we love raising the kids, but once they were gone, yay, we get to be together. Other couples hit crisis because what's holding the relationship together isn't a friendship, but the children. And as soon as the children leave, there's nothing to pull the couple together. This is why

sometimes you'll find what appears to be even godly healthy Christian couples divorced when they should be entering into some of their prime years enjoying one another. It's because they weren't friends doing life together. They were coworkers raising children together. And once the children were raised, there was no purpose for the relationship because the friendship wasn't at the center of it. All of a sudden, you become a caretaker. Now, one of your parents dies. So Grace's dad died a few years ago. He was a pastor for 40 some years until he died. And now Grace's mom is alive, and I love her very much. We're very close, but she's a widow. So now all of a sudden, your parents are getting older and they need care, or perhaps even one of them is widowed. Then you become a grandparent. Then the kids start to have kids. So my folks have got 15 grandkids, and then at some point in here, you're a retiree, you get to stop working, at least for a paid job. You still have stuff to do, but you're in the process of phasing out your career. Because see, right here, when you're a young adult, you're all about climbing the ladder. And then you reach a point where you're like, I just want off the ladder. I don't wanna, I don't wanna fight. I don't want to compete. I don't want all the responsibility. I I don't want the workload. I just want to cash in, enjoy my life, maybe serve the Lord, enjoy my kids travel, do something else. And it's that transition time. At some point then you're looking at being a widow. You're gonna bury your spouse and you're gonna say goodbye to them until you see them in the kingdom. And either you're gonna go first or they're gonna go first. But the odds are, unless you're a really bad driver, you're not going at the same time. Okay, that was a good joke. So, um, um, and or at some point you're facing your own death, you're realizing, you know what, the finish line is there, and I can see it, I can see the finish line of my own life. And the goal is in each season to ask, okay, what season of my life am I in? And how do I prepare for it in a way that is wise, rooted into life-giving wise counsel so I can be fruitful in that season. Um, I'll give you an example. Um, some years ago, there were, uh, two men that I knew that died at about the same season, about the same time. Both had been married for 50 plus years. Uh, one man forgot to, or didn't choose to pay for his life insurance, Didn't make any plans, didn't clean out his car, didn't, didn't clean out his closet. Just literally died. And his wife had to figure it all out. It was very difficult. The other man, he was a remarkable man. He knew that he was dying. He could see that the finish line was in sight. He paid off the house, paid off the car, paid off the bills, set everything up on auto autopay, put all the account numbers with the passwords for his wife, had the hardwood floors redone, replaced all of her appliances, um, set up lawn maintenance every year, put all the money that he had, you know, so that she could have access to it. Made sure that all of his insurance premiums were up to date. Um, told his friends how they could check in on her and love her and look after her even after he was gone. And he scheduled flowers to be delivered to his wife on their anniversary for the rest of her life after he died. So every year she gets from him flowers and a love letter, and he talks to her about, now I'm in the kingdom of God and I'm with the Lord Jesus, and I miss you. And one day I will see you again, and I want you to know that I will see you every day. Until that day, That's a man who knew what season he was in, okay? And he knew what season his wife was gonna be in. So he was gonna be dying, and she was gonna be a widow. And he decided, I will finish well, and I will embrace the season that I'm in, and I will prepare for it and maximize it. So it's knowing what season you're in, the seasons of life, and, uh, maybe this will help you. This is the worst art you've ever seen. Okay? I'll just lower your expectations. Perfect. Nailed it. Okay. What am I doing, Andy? I went to public school. Anything beyond etches sketch, and I'm in over my head in a serious situation, what do I do? Andy, you're working on it. Okay. It's red. Okay. How many of you are, uh, like me? I'm super visual. I think in pictures. I think in pictures. So I literally think in pictures. And so for me, when it comes to this issue of seasons, kind of here's how I, uh, here's how I see it. Think of it more like a clock. When you look at a clock and you see the 12 hands on the clock, I tend to look at life and then each year of life, like one clock. And for me, I'm so visual, I need to see it in one summary format, and then I can share it with others. So, so just like you would've January, February, March, April, may, June, July, August, September, October, November, December. Let's do this. Okay, you're born, now you're a baby. Um, now you're a child. Uh, now you're a young adult. Uh, now you're a worker. You're an adult worker responsible for yourself. Um, now, um, you're married, then you become a parent. Now you got kids. Um, then at some point they leave. Uh, you're an empty, I apologize for the penmanship. Uh, Then you're a caretaker. Now you're parents need your help. Um, now you're a

grandparent. Uh, then at some point you're retiree. Um, and then you're a widow. And then at some point you're dying. There's your whole life. Every time you look at a clock, just think there's 12 hands on that clock. And there's 12 hands in my life. You're born, you're a child, you're a young adult, you're a worker, you're married, you're a parent, you're an empty nester. You're a caretaker of parents that are getting older. You're a grandparent with grandkids. You're now investing involved in you're retiree. You're hoping that you've financially set yourself up in such a way that you're not devastated. Um, you're a widow. Maybe you bury your spouse or you're dying and you need to say goodbye to them. Sobering, isn't it? I mean, we get so busy working in our life, sometimes we don't really take a look at our life so we can work on our life. So my question to you would be, what season are you in? I'm, I'm right here in the thick of it, parent. I got five kids, 11, 13, 15, 17, and 19 teenagers, three boys, two girls. So we're officially at zone defense, right? They've got us outnumbered. My oldest daughter is off in college, she's in college, which is crazy. I could still remember giving her piggyback ride when she was a little girl. My two sons are now taller than me, which is not a huge achievement, but it is different. Um, my one son's, six foot one, I look up at him the other night. I said, I wanna give, let me give, dad wants to give you a kiss. But he is like, okay, he's got a, he's gotta really lean to get a kiss on the head from his dad. The other day, my son, my other son, he's 15. He's, he's thick. He lifts, he's taller than me. He is, he's a big kid. And he, he opens the fridge and he's getting something out. And my wife is yelling at the fridge, mark, Hey, mark, mark, mark, mark. She thinks it's me. It's not. It's my 15-year-old son. He turns around. He is like, huh? She's like, oh my gosh. You know? So we're at that point where his shoulders are as thick as mine. His neck's as thick as mine. He is handsome and he's very thick. So, but it's just weird as a dad. 'cause I remember when he was just a, I mean, when, when you're, when you're a little kid, everybody comes up to you and they say, oh, you've gotten so big. You grow so fast. And then when you become a parent or a grandparent, you realize that's true. It, it is so fast. I recently bought my oldest son a truck so he can take the kids to and from school. And I, I never, I wasn't emotionally ready for that. I handed him the keys, he jumps in the truck. Here's what I hear. It's driving really fast, right? I was like, he's, he's gone. I still remember when he was a little boy, we had one of those little plastic, uh, jeeps that the kids could ride around the yard in. I remember him in that it felt like two days prior. And then he's six foot one driving away in a truck. Seasons all of a sudden, my kids are in their seasons. I'm in my seasons. All the seasons are changing, and they're changing so rapidly. What season are you in? And what happens is, um, sometimes we'll have life transitions that slingshot us from one season into the next. And if we're not cognizant of that, we're not prepared for that. We don't anticipate that. We find ourselves doing old things in a new season, and life starts breaking and failing. You know what I'm talking about? Um, so here are some transitions that happen. You get divorced, true or false, divorce changes. What season you're in completely changes what season you're in. Uh, you're widowed changes what season you're in, one of your parents dies, changes what season you're in. Your child dies, changes your season. Some member of your immediate family, your kid or your spouse, or you get very sick with a, with a real bad illness or a catastrophic injury that changes what season you're in. How many of you have found that a job change or a career change changes? What season you're in changes all of your priorities? Everything has to get ruined. How many of you have relocated? You've moved, there's a massive, that changes what season you're in that slingshots and readjusts everything. Your life feels like a snow globe that gets shook and everything goes up and you're just waiting for it to come down. When we moved here, it was, okay, I gotta, I gotta figure out if I wanna plan a church or find a job and gotta find a college for my daughter, and I gotta find a school for elementary, junior high and high school as well as college. And we gotta figure out who our friends are and where are we gonna live and where are we gonna buy a house? And how's a little bit overwhelming? You're like, all of a sudden the snow globe gets shook, all of life goes up and everything's a little unstable. The season of life shifted and it can't be, well, let's just do what we were doing before. No, everything's changed. We need to accept the season, make a plan for the season, adjust for the season, work out of our values in this season, and then start to be fruitful. But it's gonna take some time to dig the roots in. How many of you, you don't have to raise your hand, but it's been bankruptcy or catastrophic. Financial loss changes what season you're in, um, illness of yourself or a close family member. How about when your kid moves out or your kids move out, changes your season, A child

marries changes your season, retirement happens, changes your season. See that? And what I talk to people sometimes though, the, they feel a little overwhelmed. I don't know what to do. Things aren't working, life isn't coming together. I'm working hard. I'm trying my best, I'm, I'm, you know, I'm doing what I've always been doing, uh, because it worked in that season. It doesn't work in this season. It's not that what you're doing is necessarily sinful, evil, foolish or wrong. It's just the wrong season. It's flip flops in the snow. What you're doing doesn't work now because it's a new season. Does that make sense? Yeah. Okay. Now, number two, I wanna say that maturity is based upon maturity in your season. So when we think of maturity, we don't expect a child to be the same as a man. Um, what we expect is not for a little girl to be the same as a grandmother in maturity. So when we think of spiritual maturity, we also have to factor in seasons. So I wanna ask you, what season are you in? But also how mature are you? And, and your maturity is seasonally, contingent. I'll give you an example. So in Luke 2 52, it says that Jesus grew in wisdom, stature in favor with men, and God, he grew, okay? What that means is Jesus was mature for a 4-year-old when he was four. Jesus was mature for a 14-year-old when he was 14. Jesus was mature for a 24-year-old when he was 24. But because he grew in wisdom, stature in favor with men and God in the season of 24, he was not at exactly the same maturity level as the season of four, though he was mature in both seasons. Does that make sense? Yeah. So for those of you who are parents, I give you this because you can look at your kids and be like, they're immature. No, maybe they're mature for their, for their season, for their age. And, and Paul says it this way, in one Corinthians 13:11, he says, when I was a child, I spoke like a child. I thought like a child. I reasoned like a child. I acted like a child. He said, when I became a man, I did what childish ways behind me. What he said was, I realized when I was a child, that was my season of life. There's nothing wrong with being childish if you're a child. Amen. Like, you never look at a five-year-old and say, you're acting like a five-year-old, the five year old will be like, that's what we do, right? That's, that's, that's, that's, that's where they're at. The problem is when you're acting childish and you're an adult, that's where the problem is. And what happens with those who don't mature, they, they continue to operate at the same level of maturity that was acceptable for a different season. But as the seasons of life progress, they do not mature. They do not make the course corrections and adjustments. And, and this is why sometimes you'll find people who they are doing things as adult that are very childlike. And that's the, that's the point of foolishness. Wisdom is appropriated according to the season of life. So my 11-year-old son, I expect him to be at a different place than my 17-year-old son who's at a different place than my 19-year-old daughter. They're in different seasons. She's in college, he's in high school, he's in elementary school, they're in different seasons. So maturity is contingent upon what season they're in. My question to you is what season are you in? Are you mature for the season or maturing for the season that you're in? In addition, has there been in your life, any recent transition that has thrown you from one season to another? And if so, you may have a hard time figuring out, okay, what does life look like now? Okay, that's what we'll get into the planning next week. The, the, the the last point I wanna make is not only the law of seasons and the law of life seasons, but the law of annual seasons. Proverbs 20, verse four, the sluggard, right? That's somebody who doesn't like to work. Uh, somebody who's lazy, unmotivated, the only thing that motivates a slugger is pain. So once they get hungry, then they get a job, okay? Once their wife leaves, then they call the counselor. But it takes a lot of pain to get them to the point where they're willing to do anything. The slugger does not plow in the autumn. He will seek at harvest, and he will have nothing. What he's saying is foolish people, and sometimes lazy people, they don't understand the law of the harvest. So the result is they wonder, why do I not have anything? Well, it's because you didn't plant anything, right? If it's like, I have not invested in my wife, and then crisis happens, and I can't figure out why we're separating, it may have been because I didn't, I didn't make any sowing. And so I'm not getting any reaping. I didn't make any deposits. And so there's nothing to withdraw. Sometimes this is true with our own children. It's like you're supposed to be preparing them when they're younger for their older years. And if we don't allow them to learn responsibility, then as they get older, you realize their life is filled with a lot of folly and rebellion and not a lot of godliness. Why? Maybe because I wasn't sowing into them when they were little. And so there wasn't a harvest when they were older. It's the, it's the law of sowing and reaping, which fits within the, the auspices of the, the law of the Seasons. And what he's saying is that the slugger, the foolish person,

and sometimes the unmotivated person, they don't understand cause and effect that in this season, I am doing things to get ready for this season. Okay? Do you understand that? So when we're dating, I'm getting ready that we would have a loving marriage. When we're raising children, I'm raising them so that when they're older, they're independent and responsible and they love the Lord. And again, everybody makes their decisions. And I'm not saying that anything that bad happens in your life or your family is ultimately or totally your responsibility. But it is this law of, in this season, if I don't do my job, I don't feel the pain until that season. Okay? What he's saying is, it is time to plant. And the guy didn't plant and he didn't feel any pain or discomfort until it came harvest time. And there was nothing to eat. What season are you in, in your marriage? What season are you in, in your business? What season are you in with your children? What season are you in with God? What season are you in with your ministry? What season are you in with your extended family? What season are you in with your friends? And what is the investment, the deposit you're supposed to be making today so that there'll be a, a return on investment, a harvest in another season? Lots of people don't get this cause and effect, and as a result, they don't make changes until there's so much pain. And I have a lot of empathy, and I have a lot of sympathy, and I understand. But the more you're able to accept this season is now ending, this season is beginning time to make some transition and changes. And this is where the planning will come in. And the wise council will come in and the will of God will come in to figure out what season you're in, how to plan and prepare so that you will have a future. But I like to look at this law of annual seasons also in the same way that I look at, um, a year. And, uh, and that is according to basically the visual of a calendar. And I didn't, lemme just share this. I didn't, I didn't know any of this. You can go through high school and college and nobody knows how, how to organize anything. Amen. Like, you just don't know. I remember I, uh, I married Grace, I loved her with Oma heart. We were having some problems. Um, we started having kids, pretty soon we got five. We, we started ministry and it's growing. And, and all of a sudden I realize I I'm not doing well. Um, if you know me, you've heard my story. I mean, I twice, I had, uh, blown out my intestinal. I had an intestinal ulcer, uh, fried out my adrenal glands, uh, put on weight, couldn't sleep, had heartburn, all kinds of, you know, I had nervous eye twitch. Uh, people thought I was flirting with them. I wasn't. I was nervous. Um, just, I'd fall asleep and then I'd wake up and I, so much would be on my mind. I couldn't get back to sleep. Um, heartburn, uh, blood pressure elevated. And I look at photos of myself from that season, not like I look right now, but it was really bad, which just imagine how bad that was. Um, and I, I, I met with someone who was a, a successful business leader and a very godly person. And he started talking to me about, well, do you understand what season of life you're in? I was like, I, I don't know. I just put my head down and go. He's like, yeah, that's, that's not gonna work. I said, well, it's not working. I said, well, where do I start? He said, well, the first is you've gotta get the seasons of your your year. I was like, I don't, I don't even know what we're talking about. All I know is I put my head down until I die. And then I go to the doctor and then he says, you're gonna die. And then I put my head down. I keep going. That's, that's all I do. And this very wise, older business leader sat me down and he just, he literally did this. And I've been doing it ever since. I do it with my family. I do it with my, uh, staff. I recently did this with a team here at the church. 'cause it's January, it's the beginning of a new annual cycle. I did this with my family. We do this all the time. Think of it this way, uh, like a clock. You've got January, okay, February, March, April. What I find too is I share this with my staff. They can see their year and plan accordingly. As I share this with my family, they understand, oh, it's gonna be busy here, but we'll get a break there, there is a plan there, there, there are seasons. And it's not just every season. We work until we die. April, May, June, July, All August, September. And I really have terrible penmanship. Uh, October, November, December, if you'll do this, this'll change your life because you'll get to see your year. And what happens is when you lock into a season, there's that season of life and every year in that season has a rhythm to it. Once a season shifts, you need to go back and re-look at the season, re-look at the year, re-look at the cycle and reorganize your life plan. This is where it all goes together. So I'll share mine with you. Here's mine. So for ministry, and I've got two jobs. I've got pastor here at the Trinity Church and I've got Mark for school ministries. I literally have two full-time jobs. And so each of these has a different rhythm and cycle. So I have to do this for the ministry, I have to do this for the church, and I have to do this for the family. And then I try to bring those three circles together so that my schedule and our budget



actually integrates. How many of you, you've got an annual routine for your family and annual routine for your business, and they're not integrated. And the tension is you trying to pull them together. Am I making sense to anybody? Um, so I try to integrate 'em together for us. Here's the run. Ministry is right here, January, February, March, April, May, up until the end of school. And here is Easter. So I'm just sharing with you mine. So for us Christians, that's our Super Bowl, okay? This is regular season. This is playoffs that is Super Bowl. It's the biggest day of the year in the valley. This is when the snowbirds are here. This is when people are coming out literally for spring training and for the golf events. And the final four, this is when people are into their annual cycle. This is when the weather's really nice, right? That's why we all live here. What happens in May, what happens in May, Kids get outta school and it gets hotter than a pizza oven. Okay? So what happens in May, May, June, July, um, those months, um, what happens is people go up to flag, people go over to San Diego, people go on vacation, right? I mean, it's just not that way. If I was up in the north, let's say I was up, you know, in the Dakotas or Montana, what we would do in June, July, and August, we would say, Hey, everybody meet at the park. We're gonna play volleyball. We're gonna play softball. We're gonna barbecue and grill and hang out. You can't do that in San, you can't do that here in the valley, right? It's 120 degrees. People are like, I'm not even going outside. I I, I, I, I, I, I, I'm, I'm not gonna go to the park and I'm certainly not gonna run. No, the city shuts down here. Churches, it's like the rapture. All the saints are gone. You're like, where did they all go? No, they'll come back. You know? So you can't get any ministry momentum in here. So this is where you take your vacations. This is where you work on your building. This is where you invest in your leaders. And this is not where you try and do a big growth series, a big come and see sermon series. This is not where you try and do a lot of fundraising. How many of you have really tried to start something in August and you realize that's, that's impossible. That's flip flops in the snow. That, that, that's not gonna work right now. What happens in August here, school starts. So some of the families start to come back. So for us, we can get a little run up until about November, and then November is like a crazy rollercoaster ride through December in ministry. One week. It's like, look at all these people the next week. It's like, do they hate us? Are they ever coming back? They're just, there's just no rhyme or reason. It just, it's like a rollercoaster ride. And so what happens in here, people are leaving to go back to their home of origin. Their, their family's from another state, so they go back for the holidays. But some of the snowbirds come in. This is when, you know, some of the Canadians show up. Everything starts transitioning and shifting right around November, December. And it gets really locked in in January. But when does the weather really turn here in the valley? Always by the end of October. You're pretty much guaranteed it's gonna be pretty great right around Halloween. So for ministry purposes, get a little run here, a little disruption here, and then a good run here. So what I tell my staff is, if you want to take your vacation here, the answer's no because this is our busy season. Take your vacation in here and take it after Christmas, right before the new year. If you're trying to figure out when to store up your energy for you better store up energy here and energy here. 'cause you're gonna be working here. You're gonna be working here. That's how it's gonna be. Now in here too, here's my family. So in here we also have baseball season, which is my other religion and job all rolled into one. And so with my boys, I've got a hundred and some baseball games at the same time that we have our ministry run. And so if I don't sit down with the family and explain this, what happens every baseball season when we're also in the run of ministry, the family's just like, we're gone at night. It's crazy. We have tournaments on weekends, we have church on Sunday. And, and, and the family starts feeling it. Okay? So what we know is if there's any nights off or weekends off in here, we have to capture those and we need to be intentional about those. We need to protect those to get time together as a family. Uh, and also to recover. It means that any day off in here needs to be guarded religiously because it's a run. I mean, it's a, it's a serious run of a lot of hours. And it also means that they know that the run doesn't go forever, that there's a finish line. So we do our vacations in June and they know we do three weeks and you know, we go off as a family and we get a break. And I want my staff families to know, you know, in here is when I want you to plan your vacation. And I want it to be locked in every year. Now what I want you to start to see is at least for the season of life that we are in, um, this is what my year looks like indefinitely. There are times to rest, there are times to run, there are times to recover. There are times to risk. There are times when I know that income will be down. So I need to be

store housing money. Hopefully we get there. But, uh, it, ideally I'd be store housing money for the lean months knowing that I'm not gonna just have the same income every month. I'm not gonna have the same attendance every month. We're not gonna have the same enthusiasm or momentum every month. And it's understanding the seasons of life and the seasons of ministry and the seasons of business and the seasons of family. But then it's boiling it down to one year and just saying, okay, what does every year look like? So my family knows dad's gonna get a week off after Christmas. We're gonna go do something fun. We're gonna go somewhere where there's water and it's a little cooler for three weeks in June. We know that this is going to be the craziest time of year for family and ministry. And so we meet as a family and plan our vacations in advance so that they all have a voice into it and we're all looking forward to it and planning for it. And it keeps my wife in particular who's not, she's very hardworking, but she's not tremendously organized. This helps her see the year. So she knows that it's not gonna be crazy forever. Does that make sense? Lastly, I think it needs to be this simple so you can share it with your staff, that you can share it with your family, that you can share it with other people who are also involved in your life and they understand the seasons. So my questions are, um, you know, what season of life are you in? Once my kids are done playing baseball, this changes once my kids are out of school, this changes. Um, once we're empty nesters, this changes. So this is just what our year looks like for this particular season. Um, have you recently had a significant life transition that slingshot you from one season to another? What's the hardest season you've ever had? Uh, for us moving and starting a church and relocating five kids, that was a complicated season. And then, uh, what does your annual season look like? And I want you to be working on something like this. And if you're married, do so with your spouse. And next lecture, I'll get into putting together a life plan that understands the season of your life, the season of your year, and starts to integrate them so that your budget and your finances and your schedule all integrate with your family in a way that you're able to be organized and together. So lemme pray for you, father, thanks for a chance to take a, a big complicated concept, and I hope break it down to an understandable visual portrait of what a, a life looks like and what a year in a season of life looks like. Uh, Lord James one five says, if we lack wisdom to ask for it, that you'll give it in abundance without finding fault. So Father, we ask for wisdom to know what season we're in, what season we've left, what season we're preparing for and entering into, uh, to also know how to take the year and to organize it in such a way that we understand and submit to the rhythms and the seasons of the year and that, Lord God, as a result, we'd be able to drop roots, deep drink in life-giving water from your people and your presence and your word, and that we could be fruitful season to season, year to year in Jesus. Good name. Amen.