

The Seasons of Service (Pt. 1)

There are many seasons in life. It's like how Solomon put it in Ecclesiastes chapter 3:

To everything there is a season,

A time for every purpose under heaven.....

For there is a time there for every purpose and for every work. (ECCLESIASTES 3:1,17)

And, I believe that this Biblical concept of changing times and changing seasons also applies to our personal service and ministry to God.

So, what should a person do when they face a time where their personal ministry of service to Jesus goes through a drastic shift?

What do you do when you're unable to do what you've been doing for God for a long time?

What do you do when God is calling you to expand into a brand new season of service?

How can we cultivate a thriving spirit in our souls during shifting seasons of service?

In this two-part blog post, we're gonna delve deeper into the answers to these questions with the help of two different female Bible characters.

Today, for Part 1, we're gonna look into the first lesson of truly adapting to shifting seasons of service through the Bible character Leah.

Who Was Leah?

Leah's "beauty problem" wasn't exactly a BEAUTY problem!

Most people know Leah as Rachel's plain ugly older sister.

But, what the Bible tells us about Leah is quite frankly more sad than what popular ideas and human opinions tell us about Leah.

In Genesis 29:17, we read:

Leah's eyes were delicate, but Rachel was beautiful of form and appearance. (GENESIS 29:17)

What does it mean that Leah's eyes were "delicate"?

Well, I like how two Bible commentaries help us see the startling reality of the so-called "ugliness" people assumed Leah had.

Leah, whose name signifies languor, weariness, had dull bleared eyes. Probably she suffered, as so many do in that hot sandy region, from some form of ophthalmia. – ELLICOTT'S COMMENTARY FOR ENGLISH READERS, EMPHASIS ADDED

What's ophthalmia?

According to Merriam-Webster's Dictionary, ophthalmia is basically defined as an inflammation of the eyeball. There are severe forms of ophthalmia, but it's likely Leah had a milder form of ophthalmia, as Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible puts it:

“Leah was tender eyed,... Blear eyed, had a moisture in them, which made them red, and so she was not so agreeable to look at...” –GILL’S EXPOSITION OF THE ENTIRE BIBLE

So, probably the reason why Jacob found Leah unattractive was not because of her demeanor, but her defective eyes.

Leah & Changing Seasons

Leah learned the most important lesson to truly thrive in changing seasons

So, what can we learn from Leah and her own phases of shifting seasons of service?

Let’s start at her first service season.

In verse 9 of Genesis 29, we read:

Now while he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father’s sheep, for she was a shepherdess. (GENESIS 29:9)

So, the beautiful Rachel was strolling out in the sunny fresh air, leading her father’s flock to the well.

But where could Leah be during this time?

Perhaps, during this season of service in her life, she’s at her father’s house. Perhaps, due to her ophthalmia giving her eyes a sensitivity to light, she’s doing domestic duties in the dark. Perhaps she’s trying to cook and clean the best she could despite the thick blurriness of her eyesight.

And, perhaps, she’s not really loved nor appreciated because of her defective eyes.

But, it doesn’t say anywhere in the Bible that Leah complained or was upset that Rachel was outside leading all these sheep to the well, while she was stuck in the obscure darkness of her father’s house, trying her best to keep the house in order.

Instead, I believe that Leah was probably learning to accept her current season of service. Probably she was learning to embrace this current season of service in her life and learning to be content in serving where God had placed her.

The First Lesson To Thrive In Shifting Seasons

Here in Leah’s story we see the first key lesson to truly thrive in seasons where callings in ministry change.

The Lesson of Being Content

What does it mean to be content?

I like how the book of Hebrews draws out the basic definition of the word “content.”

Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” (HEBREWS 13:5)

The Greek word for “content” in Hebrews 13:5 is the Greek word *arkeō* (ἀρκέω), and it has a very interesting definition. It means “to be possessed of unflinching strength; to be satisfied.”

Hmm.....so could it be that as Leah learned to be content with her season of service, she also learned to gain the strength she needed to thrive in her time of dark obscurity?

If so, how much more for us as Christians as we face our own shifting seasons of service! We need to learn to be content in the season God is guiding us into, so the vitality of our souls can be truly strengthened!

Contentment brings strength.

Covetousness brings weakness.

Which spirit are you partaking of as you enter a changing season in your own ministry and service for Christ?

An Appeal & A Prayer

Friend, it may be that you're currently finding yourself in a shifting season of service where everything is dark and obscure. You may find yourself serving God in the same place where Leah first started.

But, dear reader, I wanna appeal to you to choose to follow Leah's example.

Instead of complaining over the Rachels in your life, I wanna appeal to you to begin saying yes to contentment today!

Would you, dear reader, like to seriously begin learning to be content—just like Leah—during your own season of dark and obscure service?

If so, I encourage you to just pray:

Amen! Maranatha!