

HOW TO DEAL WITH NIGHT SEASONS

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A night season is a time of darkness before day-break. It is the time before a breakthrough. It is a time of wailing and crying. Night season is a time of disappointment, frustration and depression. Night season is a time one does not clearly hear the voice of God, and therefore does not know what to do. It is a time one is not sure of the next step to take.

A night season is the time you feel like quitting or giving up. It is a time when one questions the reality of the promises and presence of God in one's life. It is a time one questions the call of God or the will of God. It is a time of pressure both from within and from without. Night season is a time of anxiety, fears, frustrations, anger and bitterness. In some cases, it is a state of hopelessness and confusion.

You may be going through a night season right now; I want to assure you that every night season, including yours can be handled. Victory is sure for you.

"For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favour for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.... you turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing to you and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give you thanks for ever." (Ps. 30:5, 11, 12)

HAVE HOPE

Every night season must pass, therefore it can be handled. Don't despair, have hope. After every night, comes day. He that created the night, also created the day. Your day light must come and will not fail.

Just as after night, comes day, so also solutions after problems. After wailing, comes dancing. After weeping, comes joy and laughter.

Every night season has a terminal date and time. Don't despair. Have hope. All you need do is to learn how to handle night seasons. It comes once in a while. Even the holiest of men like Paul the Apostle had night seasons. Elijah had night seasons, and wanted to die. John the Baptist had night seasons. In one of those night seasons, he began to doubt that Jesus was the Christ. He had to send his disciples to confirm if he was the Christ.

HOW TO DEAL WITH NIGHT SEASONS

We are going to use the experience of Paul to deal with the issue of night seasons.

A. NIGHT SEASON NO 1 - TROAS.

"Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of

Jesus would not allow them to. So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas.” (Act 16:6-8).

1. Paul was tired and exhausted, and probably sick and looking for a doctor (Luke).
2. Paul was frustrated for certain by the closed doors. You can imagine how he felt trying to move ahead with his work in his condition, but unable to do so.
3. Paul possibly was confused about his calling because of the closed doors.
4. Characteristics of this night season.
 - a. Not clearly hearing the voice of God.
 - b. Not sure of the next step to take.
 - c. Frustration.
 - d. Felt like quitting.
 - e. Questioned the call of God.

HOW HE HANDLED IT.

5. How we handle night seasons determine the long term effectiveness of our witness.
 - a. Paul WAITED at Troas.
 - b. He could have quit and gone back to Antioch.
 - c. He could have gotten angry with God because of the closed doors.
 - d. Waiting is a test of our obedience and ability to listen for God’s voice.

HIS VICTORY

6. The Lord spoke to Paul through a vision of a man in this night season.

“During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, come over to Macedonia and help us”. (Act. 16:9)

- a. God revealed his plan and purpose - Go to Macedonia.
- b. Paul’s vision and vigour was renewed.
- c. Paul immediately packed and went to Macedonia.

B. NIGHT SEASON NO 2 - CORINTH.

“After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, Who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them”. (Act. 18:1-3)

1. Paul arrived in Corinth alone and broke. He had to get a secular job to survive.
2. To really understand Paul’s thinking at this time, we must appeal to his later letters to the Corinthian church.

“I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling”. (1 Cor. 2:3)

“For when we came into Macedonia, this body of ours had no rest, but we were harassed at every turn - conflicts on the outside, fear within”. (2 Cor. 7:5)

PAUL'S FEARS AND CONCERN

- a. How can I proclaim a supernatural gospel in the midst of lack and crisis?
 - b. How can I preach the provision of God while having to work a side job?
 - c. How can I proclaim being an overcomer when always been run out of town?
 - d. What will others say?
 - e. How can these things be if I am in obedience to God's calling?
3. It is implied that Paul's inner fears may have caused him to stop preaching the gospel. His confidence in his calling may have been shaken.

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS NIGHT SEASON

- a. Fear
- b. Lack
- c. Opposition
- d. Loneliness

5. HIS VICTORY

The Lord spoke to Paul in a vision in this night season.

"One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision. Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no-one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city". (Act 18:9-10)

- a. I have many people in this city. You may not be able to see them yet, but they are here.
 - b. They may call themselves Hindus, Buddhists, or Atheists. But I have gone before you preparing the way - they are mine.
6. God's word is one of reassurance - DO WHAT YOU CAN WITH WHAT YOU HAVE AND TRUST ME for I have many in this city.
7. This word from God enabled Paul to write to the Corinthians and the Ephesians later.

"My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power". (1 Cor. 2:4)

"Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled round your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place". (Eph. 6:13,14)

C. NIGHT SEASON NO 3 - JERUSALEM.

(Act. 21:18 - 23:10)

1. Paul was warned, arrested, bound and nearly torn apart by a mob.

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS NIGHT SEASON

- a. Hopelessness
- b. Despair
3. Paul found himself from his original calling (purpose) with no apparent way to get back to it.
4. The Lord himself spoke to Paul in this night season.

“The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, ‘Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome;’ ”. (Acts 23:11)

D. NIGHT SEASON NO 4 - AT SEA

(Act. 27:1 - 22)

1. On board a ship bound for Rome a prisoner.
2. Caught for 14 days, in a “hurricane” type storm.
3. Perhaps the most grievous circumstance faced by Paul.

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS NIGHT SEASON

- a. Hopelessness
- b. Fear of death

“When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved”. (Act. 27:20)

5. PAUL’S RESPONSE

- a. Paul prayed to the Lord God.
- b. Not for his own salvation. He knew his destiny.
- c. Prayed for others who did not know their destiny.
6. The Lord spoke to Paul by an angelic visitation in this night season.

“Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me and said, Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar, and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you”. (Act. 27:23:24)

- a. The Lord “whose I am” and “whom I serve”.
- b. The Lord has given me the souls of those with whom I sail.
- c. Intercession for others in time of need.
- d. Paul prayed selfless prayer in the time of lack.

CONCLUSION

From the study we have just had on Paul’s night seasons, we can draw the following conclusions and lessons that can help us handle night seasons when they do come.

1. Whatever God puts in your heart to do, he is personally committed to its success. So don’t despair.

2. Keep doing what you are doing until you hear from God. Don't be idle for any minute.
3. Don't give up! Wait patiently for instruction, direction or a word to take you out of your night season into day light.
4. Be vigilant - alert and sensitive in the spirit to know what God is saying or going to say to you. Make use of every opportunity.
5. Carry out his instructions in faith, and breakthrough will occur. He may ask you to do what seems impossible or foolish in your eyes. Just do it. Always remember he is God and you are not. He is wisdom and source of it.
6. Pray fervently during night seasons.
7. Have faith in God and patiently wait for Him.
8. Meditate on the scriptures while you wait.
9. Don't seek ungodly counsel. It is not everybody you tell your problem or challenges.
 - Go to God directly.
 - Go to your Pastor or any trusted man of God.
 - Go to your Bible.
 - Go to your trusted and tested counselor, family member that is grounded in the word of God.

If you follow the above instructions diligently with all your heart, you will breakthrough your night season into daylight. I command an end to your night season right now. I welcome you to daylight in Jesus mighty name. Amen.

SUCCESS TIT-BITS

1. **Expectation is the mentality or attitude for receiving.**
2. **Expectation provokes manifestation.**
3. **Expectation is positioning oneself to receive the miracle desired.**
4. **Love is the greatest weapon in the universe. Where all else fails, love always wins.**
5. **Love is so powerful that the one who experiences it is always more productive than the unloved.**
6. **Love brings out the best in a man.**
7. **A loving environment is a good environment for creativity and productivity.**
8. **Love makes a man happy, and when he is happy, he is energetic. And when a man is happy, he lives a healthy life.**
9. **Wisdom is better than physical strength.**
10. **Foresight and planning is very important for survival and success.**
11. **If you get carried away by today and fail to look into tomorrow, you may find yourself in serious trouble.**
12. **Failure to plan for tomorrow is invitation to crisis.**
13. **Preparation for tomorrow is laying foundation for a successful tomorrow.**

WISDOM FOR ASSOCIATION

1. Those who will not respect your time will not respect your wisdom either. Avoid time wasters.
2. Define every relationship to manage your life and your time well.
3. Don't submit leadership of your life to friends.
4. Your friends are counselors, but you are the decision maker. Your decisions determine your experience.
5. Those you hear always have influence over you.
6. What you see friends do repeatedly, you are likely to copy consciously or unconsciously.
7. Evaluate your relationships from time to time in order to eliminate the unnecessary, and redefine the necessary.
8. Your friends are your future.
9. Sometimes, your family is bad company, keep company with those who will make your dreams come through.
10. "Bad company corrupts good character" (1 Cor. 15 : 33).
11. The one whom you follow you learn his ways.
12. Friendship is transference of spirits, moods, ideologies, philosophies, and character.

RENEWING THE MIND

1. The way you think determines the way you see. The way you see determines the way you act. The way you act determines your habit. And your habit determines your experience.
2. Small minds doubt God. Great minds believe God and his word.
3. Break loose from your negative mentality and you will shine like God meant you to shine.
4. Let not your mind be a cage and prison but a spring pad for your flight to glory.
5. As long as you see with the eyes of God, you will be what he wants you to be.
6. The thoughts of your mind will always influence, dominate and control your life.
7. Positive use of the mind brings happiness, good health, success, prosperity and long life. Negative use of the mind brings sadness, depression, high blood pressure, sicknesses and diseases, failure, poverty and untimely death.
9. Happiness, joy, sorrow, pain and sadness are moods influenced and determined by your thoughts.
10. Your habits and character are all reflections of your thoughts.

