

Weekly Study Guide for May 18, 2025 | Defining Seasons of Life

Read [Luke 2](#), [Luke 4](#), and [Matthew 4](#).

Additional Support: [Luke 2:19](#); [Acts 17:26-27](#); [Esther 1:13](#); [1 Chronicles 12:32](#); [Luke 2:40](#); [Luke 2:52](#); [1 Samuel 2:26](#); [Luke 4:1-3](#); [Matthew 4:1-3](#); [1 Peter 4:12-13](#); [1 Corinthians 10:12-14](#); [James 1:2](#); [Matthew 26:41](#); [Mark 14:38](#); [Matthew 6:13](#); [2 Thessalonians 3:2](#); [Matthew 24:12-13](#); [1 John 2:15-17](#); [Matthew 9:37-38](#); [Luke 10:2](#)

After his dedication as a small child, the Bible records that Jesus' life was marked by 12 years during which he grew in wisdom, stature, and grace.

“And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him” (Luke 2:40).

Later, as a young teen, we find Jesus confounding religious scholars. Still, he stayed in subjection to his parents. This was followed by 18 years where he grew in three specific areas of his life: wisdom, stature, and grace.

“And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in grace with God and man” (Luke 2:52).

- Wisdom (sophia)
- Maturity (hēlikía)
- Favor or grace (charis)

Jesus had 30 years of preparation before he began his public ministry (Luke 3:23). Luke 4 recounts that Jesus, now a grown man filled with the Holy Spirit, was led by the Spirit into the wilderness (v. 1). Emerging victorious from this time of testing, Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit (v. 14). He went to Nazareth, where He had been brought up (v. 16), and stood up to read in the synagogue in the power of the Spirit (v. 18).

Reflect on the following questions to explore the three distinct seasons in the life of Christ: 1) preparation and growth, 2) temptation and testing, and 3) participation and ministry.

Questions:

1. What stands out to you in the verses above? Is there a single word that describes the majority of Christ's life? What is unique about this period of His life? Why is this significant?
2. Of the three seasons, which one do you feel best applies to your life right now? Which season are you in? Why do you say this?

3. Which area of growth do you think is most relevant to you? Are you lacking in any of these areas? Which ones?
4. What does the Bible tell us about testing? Why do you think trials, temptation, and testing are interchangeable? Do trials have to defeat us? How can we overcome and be victorious?
5. What is one big takeaway from all of this? How does it apply to you? What difference will this make in your life?

For later: Take time to prayerfully reflect on how this lesson applies to your life. What did you learn? What are some personal takeaways and insights you gained? How can you apply this to your life? What is God doing in your life? Are you discerning the times and know what to do? What is this season of life about? How is God working? Is this a season of preparation or a time of testing? Ask God to reveal areas where you need to trust Him more fully or where He is calling you to deeper commitment.

Summary:

1. These verses address different seasons in the life of Christ. Much of Christ's life is characterized by growth and preparation. The Bible doesn't really say that much about the growing years. Spiritual formation and growth often happen in obscurity and hiddenness. We should be careful not to rush God's work in our lives.
2. While it is tempting to pick one season, the truth is that we often experience many of these seasons at the same time. If we wait until we're perfect, we might never step into ministry, use our gifts, or participate in God's work. At the same time, if we let down our guard, we might succumb to temptation. God is always preparing us for what is in front of us. The key is to discern the times, to recognize what God is doing, and to know what to do.
3. Again, we should always be growing... in wisdom, in maturity, and in God's grace. We can always use more wisdom. We need to make sure we grow up. Don't be a spiritual Benjamin Button. And of course, where would any of us be without God's grace?
4. The Bible tells us to expect various trials. This is the hard part. Don't be surprised or consider it strange when you encounter difficult things (1 Peter 4:12-13). Believe it or not, trials are common. We all go through them and we can help each other. Thankfully, God always provides a way of escape so that you can endure it (1 Corinthians 10:12-14), and even face it with joy (James 1:2). Trials don't have to defeat us; instead, they prepare us for greater spiritual maturity. Victory comes through reliance on God, prayer, and remaining steadfast in faith. We persevere for the reward! We overcome through Christ who gives us strength.