

Embracing The Winter

By Janice Boyce

Winter is the least favorite of all the seasons. Very seldom do you hear someone say, “I just can’t wait until winter gets here.” In fact you will probably hear something more like, “I dread to see winter come.”

Winter is characteristic of cold days and long nights. There is a chill in the air and a bite in the wind. The depressive effects of winter are tiredness, malaise, and inactivity. It is like the body, mind, and spirit have a seasonal lull and the yearning for the sunlight is ever present. Statistically, more suicides are committed in the winter than any other time of the year.

Culturally, people have used creativity to combat the winter blues. They embrace winter by building snowmen, making snow ice cream, having snow balls fights, and creating snow angels of all sizes. They have Winter Festivals with shimmering lights, winter games, lively music, and good food. In fact once you get passed the negatives of winter, you can see the good. There is no way you can enjoy a steaming cup of hot chocolate or mint tea like you can in the winter time. In the winter you can make a big pot of home-made soup, sit in front of the fire place, and snuggle with those you love to your heart’s desire.

It is in the winter time that the earth rests and replenishes itself. This transformation is not nearly as noticeable as the new birth of spring, the growth of summer, and the changing of colors in the fall; but rest assured it is happening just the same.

We also have seasons in our lives, and just like the earthly seasons, none of us look forward to winter. We embrace the seasons of our life that bring new birth. Oh, the joy of that first day in school, that first love, the first day as husband and wife, and that first day as new parents. Remember when you first got saved, the first special song you sang in church, and that first sermon you preached. There is nothing like the joy of spring.

Then the season of summer comes. The joy of growing into an adult, the joy of building relationships, and the joy of maturing as God uses you to minister in song, in the Word and many other ways. The season of growth is so exciting.

When the season of harvest comes, there is rejoicing and fulfillment beyond words. How rewarding to see the fruits of your labor and to know that your labor is not in vain. But once the harvest comes, we must prepare and get ready for the winter.

Often times during the winter cycles of our lives, we have a spiritually depressive lull. It is during these times the meaning of giving a sacrifice of praise is fully defined. In fact, it may take every ounce of strength you have just to get to church. To embrace this time in your life is the last thing you want to do. But embrace it, you must.

This is the time you need to replenish your relationship with God and others. Instead of dwelling on the negatives that this season brings, begin to focus on the invisible, inward work that is taking place. Like a steaming bowl of homemade soup, feast on the rich Word of God. Snuggle up to God and let Him comfort you, warm you, and nourish your inner most being. Embrace this short season of your life, because the strength of it will take you through the next three seasons. The more you embrace your winter, the greater your spring, summer, and fall will be.

In Luke 9:51, it says, “And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.”

Jesus embraced His winter because He so loved us. Let us embrace the winters of our lives and draw closer to Him. Remember, the Son is always shining in every season.