

## Seasons / Nga Wahanga

Ecclesiastes 3:1-3 “There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build...”

The concept of seasons is throughout nature... Winter, spring, summer, autumn. For a farmer, knowing what to do and what not to do in each season is crucial.

- If you sow seed in winter, you will lose your crop.
- If you do not water and weed in summer your crop will be small.
- If you do not bring the harvest in in autumn all your work will be ruined.

Therefore, two important questions for us are:

What season am I in and what must I be doing now?

What happens in each season:

1. Winter / Hotoke: It is a season of endings, of review, evaluation, of preparation. Trees are bare, fields are dry, and it can look like nothing is happening. It is a time of pruning and cutting away things that are not essential, dead, unhealthy and sick to make way for the next year's growth. What attitudes, habits, behaviours do you need to deal with in your life to enable new growth so that you can move into new things?

2. Spring / Koanga: This is a time of sowing to new things, doing new things that have zero fruit now. What new work / new mahi, new activities do I need to add now, so that I will see new results in the future? This is a difficult season because not a lot has changed except that you need to get to work! Hard work, pukumahi, day by day, sowing without seeing the benefit. In Spring sow into your personal growth (spiritual, emotional, physical, mental), key people (friends, wife / husband, work colleagues, tamariki, mokopuna) and clear goals?

3. Summer / Raumati: This is about waiting for the promise. The fruit is growing, its heavy on the vine, it looks ready, but it is not. Harvest before its ready and it will be bitter and of no value. We need to keep tending it, and wait. Sometimes, this can be the hardest season. It's a season of keeping consistent in core habits, core values, and core activities. Resist shortcuts, resist compromising your character, resist giving up. Kia kaha, kia maia, kia manawanui!

4. Autumn-Harvest / Ngahuru: This is the season of gain where the farmer gives 100% to get the crop in before the weather changes. It is a season of faith, excitement and celebration, of action and effort, pukumahi ano. What actions must you give 100% to, so that the harvest will come in? What are your top 3 priorities for getting this done? What are your top 3 threats you need to guard against? Who

are the key people you need to value, honour and celebrate with?

### **Discussion Points – Whanau / Life Groups**

Share what season you believe you are in at present. How are you dealing with the challenges of their season?

Why is it important for us to know the season that we are in and how to respond to it?

What type of impact could we expect in our lives if we react in the wrong way to the various seasons we find ourselves in?

How can we encourage others (children / tamariki, parents, work colleagues, friends) who are going through difficult seasons of their lives?

### **Prayer**

Heavenly Father / E toku Matua i te Rangi, help me to work through the season I am in, doing what is necessary in the hard times and making full use of the good times you provide for us. Help me also to be aware of the different seasons others are in and to be encouraging and supportive of them. Amen / Amine.