

# Reflections on the River

## Week 27 - Seasons of Change

Scripture - Ecclesiastes 3:1–8

*For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:*

<sup>2</sup> *a time to be born, and a time to die;*

*a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;*

<sup>3</sup> *a time to kill, and a time to heal;*

*a time to break down, and a time to build up;*

<sup>4</sup> *a time to weep, and a time to laugh;*

*a time to mourn, and a time to dance;*

<sup>5</sup> *a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;*

*a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;*

<sup>6</sup> *a time to seek, and a time to lose;*

*a time to keep, and a time to cast away;*

<sup>7</sup> *a time to tear, and a time to sew;*

*a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;*

<sup>8</sup> *a time to love, and a time to hate;*

*a time for war, and a time for peace.*

*“The first yellow leaf seldom announces autumn. It simply lets go and begins the journey downstream.”*

Most anglers notice autumn all at once. One weekend the river feels like summer. The next, a cool breeze greets the morning, the aspens shimmer with gold, and a single yellow leaf drifts quietly through a favorite pool. The river has been changing for weeks, but only now do our eyes begin to notice.

That first leaf is easy to overlook. It floats past almost silently, carried by the same current that carried spring runoff and summer hatches. Yet it marks the beginning of an entirely new season. Trout respond before we do. Cooler nights lower water temperatures. Insect activity changes. Brown trout begin to color as spawning season approaches. Every part of creation adjusts to rhythms established by its Creator.

We often experience spiritual seasons in much the same way. Rarely does life change overnight. A new chapter usually begins with small moments—a conversation, an unexpected opportunity, a difficult diagnosis, the graduation of a child, retirement, or the quiet realization that God is leading us somewhere we have never been before.

Ecclesiastes reminds us that there is 'a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.' Those words are not merely observations about life; they are declarations about God's sovereign care. Seasons are not random interruptions. They are part of His loving design.

Our instinct is often to resist change. We cling to familiar routines because they feel safe. Yet the river teaches a different lesson. It never stops flowing simply because the season changes. It receives each new season as a gift from the One who sustains it.

The Christian life is much the same. Faith does not require us to understand every change before we trust God. Instead, it invites us to trust the One who never changes. His purposes remain steady even when our circumstances do not.

Perhaps you find yourself entering a new season today. You may be excited, uncertain, or even grieving what has been left behind. Remember the first autumn leaf. It does not fall because the tree has failed. It falls because the Creator is faithfully preparing for what comes next.

Stand beside the river long enough and you will discover that every season reveals another aspect of God's character. Spring speaks of hope. Summer celebrates abundance. Autumn teaches trust. Winter will whisper hope that waits patiently beneath the surface. The God who guides the river through every season will faithfully guide you as well.

## **Reflection**

- Where do you sense God leading you into a new season?
- Why is change sometimes difficult for you to embrace?
- How does God's unchanging character give you confidence for what lies ahead?

## **Naturalist's Note**

Many of the seasonal changes anglers notice in autumn are triggered by shorter daylight hours as much as cooler temperatures. Trout, aquatic insects, birds, and trees all respond to these dependable rhythms that God built into creation.

## **Prayer**

Heavenly Father, thank You for being the unchanging Lord of every season. When life changes around me, remind me that Your love, Your promises, and Your purposes never fail. Give me the faith to receive each new season with confidence, knowing that You are already there. Amen.

## **On the Water This Week**

On your next outing, watch for the first unmistakable sign that a new season has arrived. Thank God for one change in your own life that, in hindsight, became evidence of His faithful guidance.