

# Seasonal Religion

## Introduction

### 2 Timothy 4:2

1. It is a wonderful compliment to be able to say of one, "You can count on him." Dependability is necessary for success in any undertaking.
2. There is too often a tendency in every congregation to "let up" occasionally, perhaps in the summer or in the winter, when school is in session or out of session.
  - A. We must be reminded that Christianity is not a seasonal religion.
3. One great tragedy of the church is having "seasonal members".
  - A. Spasmodic, undependable; cold today, hot tomorrow; here today, gone tomorrow.
    - 1) In contrast relate example of couple who could be counted on at every service - if not something was wrong. **DEPENDABLE!**

## An Analysis of the Text

1. This passage is Paul's great and final charge to Timothy.
  - 2 Timothy 4:1-8**
  - A. He is a prisoner in Rome, and his death is imminent (vs 6-8).
  - B. The charge is verse 2 and the reason is verse 3f. **Discuss briefly**
  - C. The admonition was to an evangelist, but the text is applicable to all.
2. Christians must be "instant" (KJV) "urgent" (ASV) "ready" (NKJV/NASB).
  - A. The Greek word *ephistemi* means: to place at (disposal), to be ready, on hand."
  - B. Christianity demands a spirit of readiness.

Titus 3:1 Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to **be ready for every good work,**

Romans 1:15 So, as much as is in me, **I am ready to preach the gospel** to you who are in Rome also.

2 Corinthians 12:15 And **I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls;** though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved.

### 1) When duty calls, the Christian must be on hand!

3. Christians must be urgent "in season, out of season."
  - A. This simply means "at all times": opportune and inopportune; convenient and inconvenient; easy and difficult; when you want to and when you do not.
  - B. There is no "off season" for the Christian. However, many act as though there is. It is a seven-day-a-week, twenty-four-hour-a-day matter!

## The Nature of Christianity Demands Faithfulness

### 1. Christianity is a practice and not a mere profession.

#### A. Christianity is not a mere intellectual philosophy nor emotional feeling, but a practical demonstration.

James 1:27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

Matthew 7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

#### B. Saving faith is a working faith.

James 2:14 What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?

#### C. An acceptable love is a laboring love.

1 John 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

#### 1) Certainly not burdensome to one who's desire is to serve Him first and foremost.

1 Thessalonians 1:3 remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father,

## 2. Christianity is a practice demanding *fervor*.

**FERVOR: Intense heat; Intense feeling; ardor; zeal**

### A. Indifference and slothfulness are everywhere condemned.

Matthew 25:26 "But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed.'"

### B. The Lord demands that we be hot in zeal.

**Revelation 3:15-16**

### C. Every part of the Lord's work must be done with diligence and fervor - teaching, preaching, personal work, attending, singing, etc.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 Whatever your hand finds to do, **do it with your might...**

## 3. Christianity is a practice demanding constant fervor.

### A. "In season, out of season" means constancy. Never quit, never do a work without all our effort!

Luke 9:62 But Jesus said to him, **"No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."**

### B. Ours is the religion of "always".

**1 Corinthians 15:58**

**1 Peter 3:15**

Philippians 2:12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, **not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence,** work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;

## Christianity Is Not a Seasonal Religion

1. Christianity is not circumstantial in nature. It is not dependent upon:

A. **Place:** We must be Christians wherever we are.

- 1) The Pharisee's religion depended on where he was - he practiced it on the street corner and in the chief seats.  
**Matthew 6:2-5**
- 2) The seasonal Christian is good at church, but not so good at home or on the job;
- 3) A saint in the presence of the preacher, a reprobate when he leaves. It all depends upon the circumstances.

B. **Time:** We must be Christians regardless of the day or hour.

- 1) The seasonal Christian is zealous except on vacation.  
**Hebrews 10:25**
- 2) The seasonal Christian serves well at 11am but not at 10am.
- 3) The seasonal Christian remembers Christ on Sunday but not on Wednesday.

C. **Weather:** We must be Christians in spite of the weather. Many are constant in fair weather, quit when it rains.

- 1) We are all for the Lord if it is not too hot and not too cold, not too wet and not too dry!

D. **Feelings:** We must be Christians regardless of our feelings. The seasonal Christian works when he feels fine, shirks at a headache.

- 1) He prays long and loud when he is sick, forgets to pray when he is well.

## 2. Reasons for not being seasonal Christians.

### A. The real test of Christianity is in serving in spite of circumstances.

1) How much faith and love would be required if: one lived next door to the church house, the weather was always 65 degrees, he enjoyed excellent health and had nothing else to do?

a) One ought to go even under such pleasant circumstances, but that would not test our devotion.

2) In serving Christ we must sacrifice: feelings, convenience, time, etc.

### B. The uncertainty of the future should inspire to constant fervor.

1) Death is certain to come, and what if death should find me: on the golf course instead of at the Lord's house; driving to a relaxing destination instead of worshipping with the saints? What if the end should be for me when it's raining or when I have a headache, and these have hindered me from doing my duty?

**1 Thessalonians 5:4-6**

Matthew 24:44 Therefore you also be ready, for **the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.**

2) I can be ready for my Lord only if I make my Christianity a seven-day, twenty-four-hour matter.

a) **Our hearts must be in tune with God.** We don't know how long we have before death or our Lord's return.

### **3. Examples of seasonal Christians:**

#### **A. Demas (hindered by worldly attractions)**

2 Timothy 4:10 for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica — Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia.

#### **B. Galatians (hindered by heresies)**

Galatians 1:6 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel,

### **4. Example of a constant Christian:**

**A. Paul (faithful in prison, out of prison; when supported, not supported; with friends, without friends). He practiced what he preached.**

## **Conclusion**

- 1. If the Lord should come this coming summer, this week, this day, would He find me at the post of duty?**
- 2. Seasonal religion is a gambling religion. Maybe in, maybe out! We cannot afford to take a chance.**  
**Revelation 2:10**

