

Sunday, September 18, 2022

Scripture Reading: 1 Timothy 2:1-7

Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower. —Albert Camus

If you're like more than one-third of Americans (in some surveys, the number is higher), you are looking forward to Thursday. Why? Because September 22, 2022, marks the beginning of autumn, or the fall season.

Of course, this is an arbitrary date. It is the beginning of the *astronomical* season of fall. The *meteorological* start of fall is September 1, and the season consists of September, October and November. This latter designation makes more sense to me, so I have been in a fall mood for three weeks already!

But why do people like this season more than the others? First, think about your own response to that question. You might find your reasons in the following list.

Watching the leaves change color / The chill in the air / Drinking hot chocolate / Making homemade soup / Beginning to cook holiday foods / Watching Halloween movies / Wearing big sweaters / Listening to the sound of rain on my roof / Lighting seasonal candles / Baking pies / Having cinnamon apple food/drinks / Making pumpkin pie / Having pumpkin spice food/drinks / Drinking hot apple cider / Carving pumpkins / Wearing chunky socks and boots / Stepping on crunchy leaves / Wearing plaid/flannels / Baking pumpkin bread / Going "leaf peeping" / Having a backyard campfire with friends / Seeing my breath when walking outside / Roasting marshmallows / Eating candy apples / Taking fall-themed photos / Seeing frost on the grass / Going pumpkin picking / Eating pumpkin seeds / Wearing scarves / Getting ready for the holidays ¹

Many of these reasons resonate with me. How about you?

The changing of the seasons is another sign of the profound depth of the Creator's mind. When I discern through my sense of smell the autumnal changes in the air, or catch a whiff of my wife's pumpkin pie cooling on a rack, I praise God, and lift my thanksgiving to the heavens. In Psalm 104, we read, "You have made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows its time for setting" (v. 19; see Daily Bible Readings on today's Activity page). Yes, God made the seasons, and so, like the psalmist, you and I can praise God: "I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being. May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the LORD" (vv. 33-34).

—Timothy Merrill

¹For more information, see: Chris Melore, "Fall is America's favorite season, but pumpkin spice or cooler temps aren't the biggest reasons," *StudyFinds (Research in a Nutshell)*, studyfinds.org, October 15, 2020. Retrieved February 14, 2022.

Prayer: Creator God, thank you for the wonderful signs that accompany the change in seasons. These are always a reminder that you take care of all that you have made. Amen.

*Blessings,
Lisa & Pastor Ben Motz*

Daily Bible Readings

- Sunday:** 2 Thessalonians 1-3
- Monday:** 2 Chronicles 23-25
- Tuesday:** 2 Chronicles 26-29
- Wednesday:** 2 Chronicles 30-32
- Thursday:** 2 Chronicles 33-36
- Friday:** Ezekiel 1-3
- Saturday:** Psalms 103-105



ACROSS

- 2. _____ and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.
- 5. Blessed are the _____, for they will see God.
- 6. Blessed are those who _____ after righteousness.
- 7. Blessed are the _____, for they will receive mercy.
- 8. Blessed are the _____, for they will inherit the earth.
- 9. Blessed are those who _____, for they will be filled.

BEATITUDES

Fill in the blanks below to complete the crossword. Answers are based on Matthew 5:1-13, New International Version.

DOWN

- 1. Blessed are the _____, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 3. Blessed are those who are _____ for righteousness' sake.
- 4. Great is your _____ in heaven.
- 7. Blessed are those who _____, for they will be comforted.

