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Evelyn Waite and Kathy Webber are collaborating on this project in an effort to encourage our Christian sisters and possibly *to inspire other women to participate in this effort.*



A Tale of Four Seasons

Once upon a time, Spring was born. She was a lively little child, and her spirit was that of an angel one minute and a curious, adventuresome little imp the next. Spring was born amidst the beautiful blooming flowers and warm sunshine. Nights were still cool, and sometimes she seemed so fragile.

It had been such a long, hard, cold winter, but now the beautiful spring flowers began to burst from their sleepy beds. The world seemed all fresh and new. All around Spring, there was new life: green grass, budding trees and robins. Speckled fawns sprang along beside their mothers. Roly-poly puppies and lively kittens romped and played. All was fresh and new and lively. And so Spring grew.

She grew lovely and graceful as she charmed the hearts of all around her. There were times when she questioned just how lovely she was (she could just **die** when another zit appeared), and she didn't always feel graceful (she just hoped no one saw her books fall out of her locker again). Spring certainly didn't always feel charming. It was hard to feel charming, much less to **be** charming, when that nerdy looking guy always seemed to show up just as her latest prince charming was about to walk her to class!

But all in all, life was good. Mom and Dad weren't too square, and she had some good friends in the teen group at church. She got to do lots of fun things most of the time, and school was usually not too bad. Spring loved the warmth and freedom of the lengthening days. She had lots of plans and dreams. Life certainly held lots of promise, if her luck held out.

After what seemed like a long time, but was really only a few short years, Spring grew into Summer. She was all grown up now. College had been all she could have hoped for. Lots of cute guys (surely there would be a

Prince Charming among them!), challenging classes, lots of new friends, and only a few nerds to contend with.

She had entered her new profession and her new life as Mrs. Summer almost simultaneously. "He" (her prince charming for real) was absolutely perfect. Their wedding was the stuff dreams were made of, and she had certainly felt lovely and graceful and charming that day as together they committed their home to God. And their life together was mostly blissful (except when he lay on his back and snored--or worse, didn't pick up his dirty socks and put them in the hamper!). But he had given her two of the most wonderful blessings in the whole wide world -- their two babies.

Yes, life was good for Summer, and she basked in the long, warm, hazy summer days. She could choose between staying home with her babies (for Prince Charming was a good provider) or making her mark in the working world. Since she and Prince Charming were both strong Christians, their lives were busy and happy as they served their Lord together and did their best to bring up their sweet little ones in His way.

Sometimes Summer would get so tired. And there never seemed to be enough money, no matter how carefully they budgeted, to do all the decorating she would like to do, or to travel to the places they wanted to go. Someone always needed a new pair of shoes or braces or money for camp or for a school trip with the band. Not that she would ever complain. Life was so short and much too full of good things. Summer was just so happy and so thankful that she and Prince Charming had so many of God's blessings in their lives.

Sometimes she wistfully remembered the Spring she used to be and wondered where that girl had gone. But there were also times, believe it or not, when she looked forward to Autumn. At least then, she and Prince Charming would have mostly completed the job of training up their sweet children. They could look forward to spending more time together again, just the two of them, like they had once been able to do. They would surely have more financial freedom once their children were through college. Maybe they could travel more, maybe a cruise in the Caribbean. Perhaps they could take

a leisurely drive across the country and see the sights, even the museums, they had never had the time or money to see when the children were growing up. Life was very good for Summer, and it still held lots of promise as she neared Autumn.

Ah, Autumn! Such a sweet time of fulfillment! Her two precious little babies were now all grown up, and she had the **cutest, sweetest, smartest, most angelic** little grandchildren any grandmother could every have had! Why couldn't everybody else just admit that **her** grandchildren were just **it!** Prince Charming could still make her heart pitter-patter, even if his hair was getting thinner all the time and his waist line had expanded a bit (after all, she had a few bulges now where no bulges had been before!). Life was wonderful as they enjoyed their family and the marvelously warm, brilliantly colored days of autumn.

As the seasons changed, serving Jesus was still their highest priority. Prince Charming was now assuming more and more responsibility in the Lord's Church, and together they prayed, visited the sick, and taught the lost. They had weathered some of the rough waters of mid life and had come through it all--just as they always had--together and hand in hand with God. Perhaps their steps were just a bit slower and not quite so steady now, but life was still good as the days waned and grew cooler.

Yes, this Autumn season certainly had its share of challenges! She knew all along that the sunshine in the early days of winter would not warm her quite so much as it had before. After all, the days were getting shorter now. The nights were getting longer and colder, but she could still enjoy life.

Life began to hand her some bitter pills now, though. Her health began to decline, and not long ago, Prince Charming had gone before her to his reward. Silly Prince! He always did think he had to do everything first, just to make sure he smoothed out the way for her. She did miss him terribly, but life was not all bad. She still worked hard for Jesus, even though she began to hand over some of the Bible classes to Summer and Autumn now. But she still taught the lost and rejoiced in their obedience to God, and now she could mourn with those who mourned, just as she had always rejoiced with those who rejoiced. There was still food to take to new mothers and to the sick and to the bereaved. There were still visiting chorus members to host, and there were still those younger than she who came to her for advice or consolation or encouragement. She still had value in the Master's kingdom.

Winter still loved those special times with her children and grandchildren, and there were even times when she thought that maybe before too much longer she could even be a--no! Surely she couldn't be a **great-grandmother** so soon! Why, it seemed like only yesterday when she couldn't even imagine becoming a grandmother, much less a **great-grandmother!**

But somehow in the chilly days of Winter, it warmed her heart to think of that new Spring that might not be too far away. Winter had always walked hand in hand with her Master. She had run a good race and fought

a good fight. She had nothing to fear in the cold, dark days of Winter, for she still walked hand in hand with Him each day...and Spring would be coming soon.

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Seasons to the Child of God

By Kathy Webber

Spring is the birthing season

Where life begins anew.

To the child of God

*Obedience found in Christ--His gospel,
the road chosen by so few.*

Summer brings the growing season

Life drinks from the morning dew.

To the child of God

*We drink from His word,
to know whose that I am and what I
must do.*

Fall brings us its brilliant colors

As leaves begin to die and fall.

To the child of God

*We understand this beauty
of self-denial and giving God our all.*

Winter comes with the land so barren

Seemingly empty and nothing to love.

To the child of God

*The real beauty was never about us
it is the white raiment that comes
from above.*

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Double Rainbow - Handiwork of God

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*just
when the
caterpillar
thought the
world was
over, it
became a
butterfly..*

-proverb

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