

LETTING GO TO GROW

RELEASING WHAT NO LONGER SERVES YOU

BY TRACEY BRADLEY

“Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.”

JOHN 15:2 (NKJV)



CHAPTER 1

The Sacred Rhythm of Growth

“To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven... A time to plant, and a time to pluck what is planted.”

ECCLESIASTES 3:1, 2B (NKJV)

There is a sacred rhythm to spiritual growth—one that often begins not with addition, but with subtraction. In our human nature, we tend to measure progress by what we accumulate: new goals, added responsibilities, greater achievements, and expanded networks. Yet in the Kingdom of God, true expansion frequently starts by clearing away the clutter of past seasons.

In our spiritual walk, we sometimes cling to habits, relationships, mindsets, or even ministries that once served a vital purpose but now hinder our progress. What sustained you in one season may weigh you down in the next. Letting go isn’t always easy, but it is deeply necessary for the new thing God desires to cultivate within us.

❖ AUTHOR'S COMMENTARY & REFLECTION

Reflecting on the Seasons of Life: Subtraction feels counterintuitive in a culture that glorifies constant accumulation. When we view letting go as a loss, we resist God’s natural order. Notice how trees do not mourn when autumn leaves drop; they prepare silently for spring’s blossom. Ask yourself today: *What am I attempting to keep alive that God has naturally declared completed?*

CHAPTER 2

The Weight We Weren't Meant to Carry

“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.”

HEBREWS 12:1 (NKJV)

We often hold on simply because it is familiar. We stay in that role we’ve long outgrown because it feels safe. We preserve that friendship that drains more than it pours out of habit. We nurture that subtle fear that whispers we aren’t ready for what lies ahead.

When we cling to what no longer serves our divine assignment, we crowd out the very space God wants to fill with fresh purpose, deeper peace, and renewed joy. Jesus invites us into authentic freedom—not just liberation from sin, but release from self-imposed burdens that keep us stuck in place.

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Distinguishing Weights from Sins: Notice that Hebrews 12:1 mentions laying aside *every weight* in addition to sin. A weight isn't necessarily bad or sinful in itself; it might be an old routine, a good commitment whose time has passed, or an expectation you were never meant to carry. Running a winning race requires traveling light. Examine the contents of your spiritual backpack today.

CHAPTER 3

Embracing the Pruning Process

“Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.”

JOHN 15:2 (NKJV)

The process of pruning may feel uncomfortable, even painful, but it is profoundly purposeful. A master gardener does not cut back a vine to destroy it, but to ensure its vitality and maximize its fruitfulness. Without pruning, a plant’s energy is scattered across weak branches, yielding small, underdeveloped fruit.

In the same way, God prunes areas of our lives so that our spiritual energy and devotion can be directed toward what truly matters. Pruning is not a sign of rejection; it is evidence of God's loving care and investment in your future growth.

❖ AUTHOR'S COMMENTARY & REFLECTION

The Purpose in the Cut: It is important to remember that God prunes healthy, fruit-bearing branches, not just dead ones. When you experience a sudden shift or loss despite faithful service, do not assume you have failed. The Vinedresser cuts back what is good so that you have room for what is abundant and extraordinary.

CHAPTER 4

Recognizing the Signs It's Time to Release

“Do not remember the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth; shall you not know it?”

ISAIAH 43:18-19A (NKJV)

How do we discern when a season has come to an end? Transition often leaves subtle marks before a full shift occurs. Recognizing these indicators allows us to cooperate with God's timing rather than resisting it:

- ✦ **Spiritual or Emotional Exhaustion:** You feel consistently stagnant, depleted, or heavy rather than life-filled in your current routine.
- ✦ **Divine Nudges:** You sense the Holy Spirit gently pushing you toward new horizons, fresh commitments, or deeper quiet.
- ✦ **Operating Outside Grace:** You realize you are holding on out of guilt, fear, or obligation rather than divine purpose and grace.
- ✦ **Season Outgrown:** You have outgrown the perimeter of your current environment, yet fear holds you back from stepping into the next chapter.

Letting go does not mean dishonoring where you have been. It means honoring God enough to trust Him with where you are going. It is a holy act of surrender that declares, *“Lord, I release this so You can replace it with what is best.”*

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Stepping into Holy Surrender: Moving forward requires releasing control. Guilt often tells us that leaving a position or changing a dynamic means we didn't care enough. But grace reminds us that remaining where God is no longer leading dishonors both you and those around you. Trust that His replacement is always superior to what you surrendered.

A PRAYER FOR RELEASE

“Father, I come to You with open hands and a willing heart. Show me what I’ve been holding onto that no longer serves Your purpose in my life. Give me courage to release it, grace to grieve it, and faith to trust You with what’s next. Prune me so I may bear more fruit. I choose growth over comfort, obedience over fear, and Your will over my own. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

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