

Account for the Season

“There’s...a right time to destroy and another to construct.”
- Ecclesiastes 3

What is a ledger; and how does it apply to the season, a season? The general understanding is that a ledger is an accounting term (book or file) to which debits and credits are entered; but as a record of transactions, it must be balanced, one side to the other, like an old fashioned scale. With a ledger in place, *the books* or accounting records are kept in order or accurate; every debit has a credit, etc.

How does an accounting term apply to *For a Time & Season* or to **deep recesses of the person, the soul?** Considering that the word “credit” can also apply to people – for example, “I give the man credit...” – why can the associative “ledger” apply too; why can’t the *ledger of life* be adopted or activated into some metric for man, his health and welfare?



We could say to someone, “How is your ledger (of life)?” If they reply that it’s balanced or is near-balanced – or that everything has been reconciled – we would understand that life was great or pretty darn good. Yes, the person has had a **few losses** but also a **few gains**. All things considered, the “accounts” are in good order and the books are balanced, etc.

But if we have a *ledger of life*, we may call it by another name; for example, we may refer to it as *a glass* – whereby our *glass* is half full, near full or running over the brim. We may perceive our *glass* and being half-full or half-empty – to suggest or imply that we are optimistic or pessimistic, hopeful or discouraged, etc. Have you ever heard someone say before, “Is your glass half-full or half-empty?” What about it, how do look at life – or how do assess your circumstances and general disposition, health, and life in general?

Why is it that I ask so many questions; and for that matter, why do I ask a questions about the questions that I am asking? Ok, life is still an unknown, and I’m not sure where my *glass* is from one day to the next or from time to time. If I depended on emotions or the way I feel, than the level of my glass could potentially ebb and flow, or using the accounting term, my books could have a broad range of possibilities – though never quite adding-up to expectation or perfection.

Whatever the time period, **can we really make such easy judgment or assessment of life**; can we so efficiently and accurately measure and report on our status, life and general welfare? When we actually or realistically don't know what the next minute might bring, are we so convinced that next year will be great...or fair...or something less? I read a quote recently from Zig Ziglar that has probably been repeated: "Expect the best, prepare for the worst. Capitalize on what comes." If old "Ziggy" is right (as no one can argue that he has passion), then even the unknown or uncertain must be framed within the expectation of that, *come what may*, we can still find good in the worst or losses of life.

I believe it is impossible to think of ourselves in the literal of a ledger; as though life is a chronological series of transactions where each debit and credit is coincident and than posted to the correct account or area of our lives. Can we so conveniently, quantitatively transact the events or occurrences of our lives? No, of course not; as life is much more subjective in its analysis and accounting; it is much about perceptions, emotions and the other intangibles that make each of us unique, personal and even spiritual. Some may have the expectation of the best and thus look at their *glass* as half-full or more; while others may view the future as bleak and, even if their glass is really overflowing, do not perceive in its relevance...reality.

Have you every met or known someone who has such a bleak view – amid so much or so many apparent **blessings in life**? They chronically complain about *this or that* – even stretching their breadth of a bad attitude to such matters that have nothing to do with them? It is as though they must complain or gripe about something and, therefore, actually seek-out things or topics for the purpose. Would you say their *glass* is half-empty; and that quite possibly, they are making you feel like your *glass* is half-empty too? Why is it that such people or never content or satisfied, never appreciate or grateful, and seldom ever to re-adjust their attitude or otherwise take a different perspective on life, present and future?

In truth, most of us fall into this category of discontentment in varying degrees; we are habitually unsatisfied with ourselves, with others and with situations – whether related to us or not. **Some could argue that being unsatisfied with ourselves is good and healthy**; that in this disposition, we are inclined to improve or to strive to be better people. But there is always the possibility that chronic forms of this attitude may be anything but good and unhealthy, as we imposed on others such a level of expectation and objective that they cannot themselves satisfy or accomplish. The point or purpose of such chronic

expectation or wanting is not to realize the other's betterment – or to otherwise help them – but to control or to manipulate them if possible. Be it a relation or supposed friend, this type of relationship cannot be healthy for anyone with a *glass*; and if continued, will not only evaporate the contents but fracture the decanter as well.

Sure, we live with discontent or a sense of wanted satisfaction; and the presence of such a condition cannot be contested as to its benefit in our lives. As I peruse the quotes of great writers and leaders, this position on discontentment rings true. But what has to be emphasized in this disposition is the intent or desire: is the intent to crush or control – or to produce a sense of hopelessness; or is the purpose to build-up, to strengthen and otherwise benefit? Neal Maxwell takes the matter or issue of discontentment to a *higher level*:

...just as God cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance, as we become more like Him, neither can we. The best people have a heightened awareness of what little of the worst is still in them! Indeed, the **divine discontent**, the justified spiritual restlessness that we feel, is a natural follow-on feeling in the disciple who has taken the Lord's counsel to 'make you a new heart and a new spirit.'

This quote (taken from Ezekiel 18) is the essence of where discontent is good and healthy; it is the use of such a human condition through divine intervention that brings each human to the understanding that they are not a god (or perfect) but they, through mercy, can be made holy – “a new heart and a new spirit.”

There's a time to destroy and another to construct as taken from the source Bible book of these writings, Ecclesiastes; but understand, that this “time to destroy” is not the form of discontent imposed by one over the other for control...and hopelessness. Such a *ledger of life* (if that is what it can be called) is more about *unfair scales* described in the book of Proverbs or the shady and dishonest tactics of tax collectors described in the time of Christ. These “types” have no good intentions to begin with and see their customer (or other) as nothing more than *the means to an end*. There is nothing in their character or heart that remotely aims to benefit the other; but quite possibly, they hold contempt for those whom they attempt to control – and even extort in the case of the tax collector. Needless to say, the tax collectors of the day were much maligned by the community because of their practices and policies. They not only abused their position, but they boasted of it as well.

The Lord's ledger is not one that discloses or reports such transactions in an apparent, balanced way; because, to do so, would suggest that our salvation and redemption is not a gift, but is instead earned through the posting of pluses and minuses. In

addition to the impossibility of such a ledger is the basic violation of the concept or objective of “balanced” – since, the basic presumption would be that the pluses would have to outweigh the minuses. Scripture reassures us that God keeps no record of wrongs (or minuses) when it comes to forgiveness; thus, we should rest assured (or be content) that, as we trust in the truth of God’s word, any ledger (if there was one) would be virtually empty because salvation is a gift – not something we earn!

With this gift of salvation, there still remains the duty of the disciple to grow in their closeness or relationship with the father. Remember what Neal was quoted as saying in a prior paragraph: “...the justified spiritual restlessness that we feel is a natural follow-on feeling in the disciple.” But the “works” or pluses of our lives are not intended for any ledger either; but rather are the result this gift called salvation. We do God’s work or we try to be good stewards because of the gift – and not because we have earned God’s grace. No matter the pluses and minuses of our lives – and the net sum – **salvation is still a gift.** If salvation was anything but a gift, than we (his creation) would be once again enslaved to the old law that relegates us to such unattainable practices and expectations of life – and thus to the kind of discontent that is so destructive and despairing.

When others (people) impose or enforce such unattainable expectations on you, what is their intention or objective? Are they really interested in your betterment and best interest; or, are they trying to use you like a tax collector uses his practices and policies for personal gain? Are they lovingly and graciously guiding you in the pathway toward this “betterment” or are they demanding and insatiable in their approach? When you think you may have been awarded some plus or credit to your account, do you sadly discover that it was never posted and, therefore, is not reported as such? Have the *books of your life* been post-edited so that what you thought was true and accurate has, to your shock, been audited with revisions, alterations...and even allegations?

A time to destroy, as the key scripture of this writing, is more about God’s work in us for our betterment – our true betterment in view of God’s love for us. When the debits or losses of life come our way, the understanding should be that God has allowed or willed it to be. To understand and explain (for us to comprehend) the reason(s) is beyond the purpose for this (or these) losses. Again, from Neal Maxwell: “We should not assume; however, that just because something is unexplainable by us, it is unexplainable.” But we must also accept that, without fully comprehending, can we accurately assess that “a loss” or

minus is actually so? Is it possible that a loss could really be a gain if it nurtures our faith and trust in our Lord? Can God bring good (pluses) out of bad (minuses)?

The scriptures also reminds us that, while God does allow some loss (or a time to destroy) in our lives, he also mends or allows as ***another to construct***. Why this pattern of loss and gain, minus and plus – or intermittent time to destroy only to construct? How else can we grow or mature without such a pattern or path; how can we grow to a level of gratitude (with contentment) unless we discover or experience the “heightened awareness of what little of the worst is still in them” and the basic, fallen state of the world? The losses or minuses of our lives remind us of what is to come versus what is; but the losses are also to grow in the knowledge and passion of who and what our Lord is after all.

Ultimately our Lord allows these losses and gains – whatever or whenever – so as to refine our so-called *ledger of life* as closed and complete...and without further remembrance or import. Forgiveness does not audit, post-edit or revise the book – as it has thrown away...and is caput! Our Lord does not hold us to the “practices and policies” – only to cheat us out of our reward to what is fair and true; and our Lord does not impose or enforce an illusive, daunting objective for the intentional purpose of failure and hopelessness. On the contrary, our Lord is love and, by example and through leadership, is able to help us to love Him, to love and forgive others. Forget the records, the books and transactions, and the practices and policies; and instead, trust by faith that his word is true, his promises are binding, and his love is above all other things.