

NOTES



PRAYER

Lord, thank You that You are present in every season. Teach us how to walk faithfully through the cold, quiet spaces of life. Strengthen our trust, deepen our roots, and form in us a confidence that rests in Your character. Amen.

OPENING QUESTION (OPTIONAL)

What is your favourite thing about winter, and what is your least favourite thing about winter?

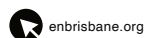


© 2025 by EVERYNATION BRISBANE®

All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®), Copyright© 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Permission to photocopy this material is granted for local church use. This is not for sale.



WORD

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him;
fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way,
over the man who carries out evil devices!

Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath!
Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil.

For the evildoers shall be cut off,
But those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land.

- **Psalm 37:7-9 (ESV)**

Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life...
But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down
under a broom tree. And he asked that he might die, saying, "It is enough; now, O
Lord, take away my life..."

And the angel of the Lord came again a second time and touched him and said,
"Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you." And he arose and ate and drank,
and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount
of God.

And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains...
but the Lord was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was
not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire.
And after the fire the sound of a low whisper.

"I will leave seven thousand in Israel... all the knees that have not bowed to Baal."
- **1 Kings 19:3-4, 7-9, 11-13, 18 (ESV)**

REFLECTION

Winter is often misunderstood. It feels still, quiet, and sometimes lonely — yet these are some of the most formative seasons in the life of a believer. Psalm 37 calls us to stillness, patience, and freedom from the tyranny of comparison. Winter reminds us that spiritual growth is not always visible. Sometimes God strengthens the parts of us that no one sees: conviction, resilience, trust, and identity.

This season can feel like God has gone silent. But silence is not absence. Silence is often God shifting the work from the surface of our lives to the soil of our hearts.

Winter also invites rest. Creation itself slows down. Animals hibernate, trees conserve energy, and the land stops producing. This is not inactivity — it is strategic recovery. It is strength-building beneath the frost. In the same way, winter discipleship calls us to slow our pace, release constant activity, and allow God to restore weary places.

Oswald Chambers reminds us that true faith is "deliberate confidence in the character of God whose ways you may not understand at the time." Winter requires this deliberate trust — not trust in what we feel, but trust in who God is.

The real danger of winter is not the cold — it's the decisions we make in response to it. Isolation, comparison, despair, and spiritual numbness can take root if we're not alert. But when embraced well, winter becomes a season of profound renewal, emotional honesty, and the strengthening of unseen foundations.

Winter is not wasted time. It is preparation time. It is the season of roots, rest, restoration, and honest waiting.

Winter not a crisis but a refining season: the season where God strips back the noise, strengthens the roots, and teaches His people to trust Him in the silence.

1. Reduced Visibility / Low Emotional Light

Like Elijah fleeing into the wilderness, winter is where emotions drop, guidance feels dimmer, and God’s activity becomes less obvious.

This is the place St. John of the Cross called “the dark night that purifies love.”

2. Pruning, Stripping Back, Simplifying

Winter slows us down. The branches look bare, but God is simplifying and cutting back what can’t bear fruit next season.

Dallas Willard captures this: “God is never in a hurry, but He is always on time.”

3. Hidden Root Work

This is where God strengthens the unseen places — conviction, endurance, interior maturity.

Eugene Peterson calls this “a long obedience in the same direction.”

4. Silence from Heaven, Not Absence

God doesn’t speak in the wind, earthquake, or fire — He speaks in the whisper.

Winter recalibrates our hearing. Silence trains our listening.

5. Trust Without Tangible Evidence

Psalm 37: “Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him, and He will act.”

Winter forces you to commit before you see results.

C.S. Lewis says: “Faith is the art of holding on...”

6. Waiting Becomes Worship

Psalm 37 calls this “being still before the Lord.”

Not passive waiting — surrendered waiting.

7. Relational Reorientation

Elijah said, “I alone am left.”

But God had 7,000.

Winter exposes isolation so we can resist it and rediscover relational warmth and discipleship.

WRONG MOVES IN WINTER

- Withdraw from community

Choosing isolation when the season calls for support.

- Let comparison and despair set the narrative

Allowing others’ apparent progress to dictate your worth or direction.

- Numb the cold with distraction

Turning to entertainment, overwork, or unhealthy habits instead of facing the season honestly.

- Misinterpret silence as abandonment

Assuming God’s quietness means God’s absence, rather than His work beneath the surface.

- Rush the season

Trying to force fruit before its time, instead of embracing patient waiting.

- Stop showing up spiritually

Letting discipline drift: skipping prayer, Scripture, worship, or fellowship because the season “feels dry.”

- Harden your heart

Allowing discouragement to calcify into cynicism or bitterness.

RIGHT MOVES IN WINTER

- Lean into discipleship relationships

Choose warmth from wise voices rather than isolation.

- Practise silence, lament, and honest prayer

Allow God to meet you in vulnerability, even if you don’t receive immediate answers.

- Trust the unseen work of roots

Hold confidence that God matures what you cannot yet measure.

- Keep simple spiritual rhythms

Small, steady practices — Scripture, prayer, worship — even when they feel quiet or costly.

- Embrace community presence

Show up. Sit with people. Share the journey instead of shielding it.

- Honour the pace of the season

Let patience shape your faith; don’t force what God is forming slowly.

- Guard your inner life

Protect your heart from bitterness by choosing gratitude, reflection, and truth from Scripture.

- Interpret silence as an invitation

See God’s quiet as space to listen and deepen trust, not as rejection.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do I reach for when God feels silent?
2. Where have I been resisting stillness because it feels unproductive?
3. What is God pruning in me — and how might this pruning be an act of love rather than loss?
4. How am I practising intimacy with Jesus when emotion is low?
5. Who are the people God has placed in my life to help me endure this season?
6. What habits or comforts have become substitutes for trust?
7. What root work might God be doing beneath the surface right now?
8. Which spiritual rhythms need to slow — and which need to steady?

NEXT STEP PRACTICE

Choose one Winter discipline this week:

- a period of silence,
- a digital Sabbath,
- a slow reading of Psalm 37,
- or a simple, unhurried prayer.

And:

Connect with someone intergenerationally — either a mentor or someone younger in the faith — to resist winter isolation and create relational warmth.

Closing Prayer

Father, we acknowledge that Winter exposes where we reach for the wrong things, where we fill silence with noise, and where we resist Your pace. We repent for the ways we have tried to force fruit, avoid pruning, numb the cold, or compare our journey to others. Forgive us for mistrusting Your silence. Forgive us for resisting stillness. Forgive us for chasing counterfeits when You were offering comfort.

Jesus, we turn back to You.

Whisper to us again.

Quiet our fears.

Deepen our roots.

Strengthen our trust.

Holy Spirit, complete the winter work You've begun in us.

Strip back what You did not plant.

Restore what has grown weary.

Prepare us for the spring You are already shaping.

We surrender this season — because it is in Your hands, not ours.

In Jesus' name, Amen.