It is my experience that we can do the right thing, for the right reason, the right way, with the right people – but unless we do it at the right time, we are almost certainly doomed to disappointment, at least in the short term.

Timing is everything – and as always with God, He does not hide that crucial fact from us – in fact, on the contrary, He tells us this many times in many ways. Many Scriptures talk about God’s timing, what is often referred to in the old KJV as “in due season”.

When we do things in our own timing, we face frustration and closed doors. But “in due season” doors open, and circumstances come together seemingly miraculously to do “mighty exploits” for your God.

Where it impacts me personally on a regular basis is when I am talking publicly of sowing and reaping, and how in my own life, my wife and I gave sacrificially for some 11 years, during which our finances went backwards instead of forwards. Then my testimony is that IN DUE SEASON we reaped, just as the Scripture says.

People often come up to me after a meeting and say something like: “Sure, it’s all very well for you – you’ve made it. But I’ve been tithing and giving regularly for 20 years, and I haven’t had a taste of reaping and abundance”. And it is a fair comment to make in the context of what I teach and the experiences I share.

However the answer is right there in Galatians 6: 7-9, which says: “… God is not mocked; for whatever a man soweth, that also shall he reap … and let us not be weary in well doing, for IN DUE SEASON we shall reap, if we faint not.”

So all I can say to that question is, that if you are sowing faithfully, in line with God’s Word, and living in holiness and integrity, then your season of reaping WILL COME. It is just that it is not yet your “due season”. My “due season” was 11 years – yours might be 11 days, or 11 months, or 20 years or 30
years! But if the Bible says it, you can believe it, because every Word of Holy Scripture is absolute Truth.

Probably the best known Scripture about timing is found in Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8, where God hammers home the eternal verity that to everything there is a time and a season, even a time for war and a time for peace. There is a time to plant and a time to reap – and a time to build, and a time to pull down.

Well known teacher and evangelist Joyce Meyer believes that God purposely sometimes stretches out the time for things He tells us to do, because in the waiting we grow and mature: “Many times He is the God of the midnight hour. He is stretching our faith and teaching us to believe in the greater things … And during the wait, our strength is renewed if we wait in faith instead of fear and frustration.

“We must realize that God’s timing is more accurate than ours will ever be. This will free us to abandon ourselves to God and say, ‘I surrender. I give my idea, my timing, my wants and desires to You. Do what You want, the way You want, WHEN You want. And I’m going to rest!”

“When we wait on the Lord, and He renews our strength, we become the kind of people the devil can’t wear out. We can outlast the devil’s attacks, standing against them until we received the manifestation of our victory IN DUE SEASON”.

In Isaiah 60: 22, God spells it out to us in no uncertain terms: “I am God! And AT THE RIGHT TIME I'll make it happen.” What things is he talking about? Earlier in the chapter He says: “I’ll give you only the best … Gold … peace … righteousness… God will be your eternal light, your God will bathe you in splendour … Your days of grieving are over…” But then He follows up those fantastic promises by saying, in effect, all these things will happen, but they will happen in My good time, in due season, not according to your agenda.

This principle, of God’s people having to fit within God’s timing, is consistent through both the Old and New Testaments:

- The eyes of all wait upon Thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season (Psalm 145: 15)
- These wait all upon Thee; that Thou mayest give them their meat in due season (Psalm 104: 27)
- A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth; and a word spoken in due season, how good it is (Proverbs 15: 23)
- Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness (Ecclesiastes 10: 17)
- For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly (Romans 5: 6)
- And be not weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not (Galatians 6: 9)
- Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty Hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time (1 Peter 5: 6)

We usually reap in a different season from the one in which we sow – even in the natural, a seed sown in the Spring is not reaped until the Autumn. Some seeds take just a few weeks to germinate and produce a harvest; others (like the pecan nut) can take years. It is all about being in God’s good timing – in due season, at the right time.

As Joyce Meyer points out, while we wait between the sowing and the reaping seasons, we can grow ourselves and be built and strengthened. We can learn the fruit of patience and long-suffering.

We live in an era of instant gratification – the microwave oven, the instant coffee, the drive-through burger – if anything makes us wait, we get irritated and frustrated (well, I may just be speaking for
myself here). Communications are instant – if we can’t get an answer back to an SMS in ten seconds or an email in ten minutes, we start to grumble and fume (well, again, maybe this is just me).

But God is never in a hurry – He is very rarely early, He is never late. He is always right on time – but that is, on His time, not our time. His ways are not our ways.

James (Message Bible) puts it this way: “Meanwhile, friends, wait patiently for the Master's arrival. You see farmers do this all the time, waiting for their valuable crops to mature, patiently letting the rain do its slow but sure work. Be patient like that. Stay steady and strong. The Master could arrive at any time” (James 5: 7-8).

What good advice – and how often it is ignored by we impatient, driving, goal-oriented and work-obsessed “workplace ministers”. You can be so busy doing good things for God, that you don’t have time for God Himself!

God wants to have fellowship with us – that is the very essence of prayer. Prayer is communication with God, and communication is two-way. A quick, hurried prayer to God is pretty much useless, if we won’t then wait to hear what God says back to us. He may say yes – he may say yes, but not yet. He may say no.

But if we leap from our prayer closet and assume that God has somehow got his marching orders for the day from us, that we have given him a “to-do” list with a deadline, then we have missed what prayer is all about.

Yet again I say – give God the first and best part of your day. Get up early and get quiet before Him. Be still, and know that He is God. And if we are quiet and receptive in His presence, he will speak to us – we will hear the “still small voice” of the Holy Ghost.

Excessive and obsessive busyness drowns that gentle and quiet voice out. If we are too busy to spend time in His presence, waiting on our own personal “due season”, then we have no right to label ourselves “marketplace” or “workplace” ministers.

We are in fact not working for God, but for ourselves, and simply putting a nice Christian “gloss” on it to make us seem somehow more respectable and to make our motives seem somehow less selfish.

Let us come before our Lord – our real Chairman of the Board – and pray the prayer Joyce Meyer recommends. It is a prayer every busy and stressed-out Christian needs to pray every morning before setting out into the marketplace:

I surrender. I give my timing, my wants, my desires to You. Do what You want to do, the way You want, when You want. And I’m going to rest!