

Making the Most of Our Time

Lesson 01 in the series: Thriving Not Just Surviving

“So be careful how you live. Don’t live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days.” Ephesians 5:15-16 (NIV)

1. We need to trust that God can use difficult circumstances to make us more like Jesus.

“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. James 1:2-4 (NIV)

“To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven...” Ecclesiastes 3:1 (NKJV)

Note: God is working on us now. We are in process.

“And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son (conformed to the image of Christ), so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.” Romans 8:28-29 (NLT)

“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)

Note: Embracing God’s purposes for us is easier when we spend time with him every day.

“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.” Romans 12:2 (NLT)

“The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus.” Acts 4:13 (NLT)

2. We need to establish meaningful routines.

“I have no peace, no quietness. I have no rest; only trouble comes.” Job 3:26 (NLT)

Note: Routines give us boundaries, help us make decisions, and make us more productive. Routines help us focus on what we CAN control during uncertain times.

Some helpful things to include in our routines:

- Regular bedtimes / wake-up times
- Regular mealtimes – especially family dinners
- Regular work hours / study hours
- Exercise sessions
- Personal Time – especially personal devotions
- Personal Hygiene / cleanliness
- Worship
- Household chores / paying bills
- Entertainment / Play time

Note: Establishing meaningful routines is easier when we get wisdom.

“Getting wisdom is the wisest thing you can do! And whatever else you do, develop good judgment.”
Proverbs 4:7 (NLT)

“Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.” Proverbs 15:22 (NIV)

“So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.” Psalm 90:12 (NKJV)

3. We need to focus on positive things.

“Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.” Philippians 4:8 (NLT)

“You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you!” Isaiah 26:3 (NLT)

Some helpful things to keep our focus positive:

- Limiting news intake
- Limiting entertainment / social media
- Limiting conversations with negative people
- Bible reading / prayer
- Eating balanced meals
- Daily exercise / fresh air
- Getting enough sleep
- Looking for opportunities to serve others
- Daily gratitude list (no redo's)

Note: Our attitudes are contagious.

“The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.” Luke 6:45 (NLT)

“Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit—you choose.” Proverbs 18:21 (MSG)

Note: Staying positive is easier if we encourage each other.

“So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing.”

1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NLT)

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Connect Group Discussion Questions

1. Describe your daily routine. How has it changed over the past 6 weeks?

2. Discuss the following list of helpful things to include in our daily routines.

- Regular bedtimes / wake-up times
- Regular mealtimes – especially family dinners
- Regular work hours / study hours
- Exercise sessions
- Personal Time – especially personal devotions
- Personal Hygiene / cleanliness
- Worship
- Household chores / paying bills
- Entertainment / Play time

Why do you think some people struggle with managing their time/schedules more than others?

3. Solomon said, “To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven...” Ecclesiastes 3:1 (NKJV) How do you think God might be shaping you during this season? (see Romans 8:28-29)

4. Read Romans 12:2 and Acts 4:13. Why do you think spending time with God is especially vital during uncertain times?

5. Read Luke 6:45 and Proverbs 18:21. If our attitudes are contagious, what attitudes have you been spreading to others recently? What attitudes are being spread to you?

6. Discuss the following list of ways to stay positive during this pandemic:

- Limiting news intake
- Limiting entertainment / social media
- Limiting conversations with negative people
- Bible reading / prayer
- Eating balanced meals
- Daily exercise / fresh air
- Getting enough sleep
- Looking for opportunities to serve others

- Daily gratitude list (no redo's)

Which item on this list is the hardest for you? Which one is easiest?

7. Spend some time praying for each other. Ask God for wisdom (Psalm 90:12), encouragement (1 Thessalonians 5:11), and control over our tongues (James 3:1-12).