

Using Every Opportunity to Help Each Other Become Mature

Message 3 of 6 in the series: "Kairos"

kairos = a God-given moment, season, or window of opportunity to do something.

"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 (NLT)

A. We need to make the most of every opportunity we have to help each other become spiritually mature.

1. Through a personal relationship with Jesus, we have been adopted into God's family as His children.

"Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance **to adopt us into his own family** by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure." Ephesians 1:4-5 (NLT)

"...you received God's Spirit **when he adopted you as his own children**. Now we call him, 'Abba, Father.' For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory."

Romans 8:15b-17a (NLT)

2. God wants all of His children to grow and mature so we can become a little more like Jesus every day.

"Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it **you may grow up** in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good." 1 Peter 2:2-3 (NIV)

"So let us stop going over the basic teachings about Christ again and again. Let us go on instead and **become mature in our understanding**." Hebrews 6:1a (NLT)

"For God knew his people in advance, and **he chose them to become like his Son**, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters." Romans 8:29 (NLT)

3. Through relationships with other believers, God will give us many opportunities to help each other grow, mature, and become like Jesus.

"As for you, Titus, promote the kind of living that reflects wholesome teaching. **Teach the older men to exercise self-control, to be worthy of respect, and to live wisely**. They must have sound faith and be filled with love and patience. Similarly, teach the older women to live in a way that honors God. They must not slander others or be heavy drinkers. Instead, they should teach others what is good. **These older women must train the younger women** to love their husbands and their children, to live wisely and be pure, to work in their homes, to do good, and to be submissive to their husbands. Then they will not bring shame on the word of God." Titus 2:1-5 (NLT)

Note: Becoming like Jesus is "caught" as much as it is "taught". "He appointed twelve that **they might be with him** and that he might send them out to preach." Mark 3:14 (NIV)

B. God wants us to think about what it takes to become spiritually mature so we can make the most of our opportunities.

"Don't act thoughtlessly but **understand what the Lord wants you to do**." Ephesians 5:17 (NLT)

1. We must understand that becoming spiritually mature takes time, commitment, & practice. "Do not waste time arguing over godless ideas and old wives' tales. Instead, train yourself to be godly. 'Physical training is good, **but training for godliness is much better**, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.'" 1 Timothy 4:7-8 (NLT)

It takes time, commitment, & practice to learn how to read the Bible and apply it to our lives. "You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and is **useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives**. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work."

2 Timothy 3:15-17 (NLT)

It takes time, commitment, & practice to learn how to pray with confidence. “Don’t worry about anything; instead, **pray about everything**. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)

It takes time, commitment, & practice to learn how to surrender every part of our lives to the control of the Holy Spirit. “But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. Since we are living by the Spirit, **let us follow the Spirit’s leading in every part of our lives.**” Galatians 5:22-25 (NLT)

2. We must understand that becoming spiritually mature means getting involved in the lives of other believers and allowing other believers to get involved in our lives.

“Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and **working together with one mind and purpose**. Don’t be selfish; don’t try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don’t look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.” Philippians 2:2-4 (NLT)

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, **forgiving** each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”
Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)

3. After carefully considering how we might best facilitate spiritual growth for everyone involved in our church, we’ve developed a network of Connect Groups.

“And **let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds**, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” Hebrews 10:24-25 (NIV)

****Urgent Need**** We need people who are willing to lead and/or host Connect Groups in their homes.

“Timothy, my dear son, be strong through the grace that God gives you in Christ Jesus. You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now **teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.**” 2 Timothy 2:1-2 (NLT)

4. We must understand the role of our pastors and staff in our church. “**Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church**, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God’s Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.” Ephesians 4:12-13 (NLT)

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Connect Group Questions:

Read Ephesians 5:16-17. Then discuss the following questions:

1. Describe your journey of spiritual growth. How has God changed you since you became a Christian? In what ways are you more spiritually mature than you were three years ago? (1 Peter 2:2, Hebrews 6:1)
2. Is it true that becoming like Jesus is “caught” as much as it is “taught”? (Mark 3:14, Acts 4:13, Titus 2:1-5) What values, beliefs, or habits have you “caught” from hanging around other believers in your Connect Group?
3. Read 1 Timothy 4:7-8. In what ways are physical training and spiritual training similar? How are they different?
4. Discuss the following statements and how they apply to your Connect Group:
 - It takes time, commitment, & practice to learn how to read the Bible and apply it to our lives. (1 Timothy 3:15-17)
 - It takes time, commitment, & practice to learn how to pray with confidence. (Philippians 4:6-7)
 - It takes time, commitment, & practice to learn how to surrender every part of our lives to the control of the Holy Spirit. (Galatians 5:18-25)
 - Becoming spiritually mature means getting involved in the lives of other believers and allowing other believers to get involved in our lives. (Galatians 6:1-3, Ephesians 4:32, Philippians 2:2-4)

5. What is the role of Centerpoint's staff in the spiritual growth of our church? (Ephesians 4:11-13)
6. Spend some time as a group praying for God to raise up Connect Group leaders for Centerpoint Fellowship Church. "The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields." Luke 10:2 (NLT)
7. Consider the following quotations from Oswald Chambers:

"The lives that have been the greatest blessing to you are the lives of those people who themselves were unaware of having been a blessing."

"Whichever way, God engineers circumstances, the duty is to pray. Never allow the thought - 'I am of no use where I am;' because you certainly can be of no use where you are not."