

## Bible Study Lesson

### “Making The Most of Your Opportunity”

#### Ephesians 5:16 (NLT)

Ephesians 5:16 (NLT) “Make the most of every opportunity for doing good in these evil days.”

(GW) “Make the most of your opportunities because these are evil days.”

**INTRODUCTION:** In this scripture, there are two concepts I want to draw your attention to.

1. Positive – Doing good and the other
2. Negative – Evil days

The scripture shows that these two forces operate on earth. God stands for good, and the devil stands for evil. Until the tenure of the Satan is over here on earth, he will continue with evil work. Despite that, good will still be in operation. Good will not surrender to evil.

**Ephesians 5:16** tells you to prepare to make the most of every opportunity to do good despite the evil that may be widespread. This widespread evil should not be any excuse for you not to do good.

This applies to every area in your life: your spiritual life, academics, destiny, ministry, marriage, career, business, etc. There may be evil, problems, and challenges, but you must be determined to make the most of your opportunities. There will be open doors and challenges around them. Paul said, in **I Corinthians 16:9** (NKJV) “For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.”

II Corinthians 2:12 (NLT) “*When I came to the city of Troas to preach the Good News of Christ, the Lord opened a door of opportunity for me.*”

Let me share Four truths on making the most of your opportunities:

**1. Forget About Yesterday; Face Today.** Some people are fond of backward looking and backward talking. They’re either talking about the good old days, when things were better or they’re wishing that they had been around in those good old days they’ve been told life was easier and opportunities abounded. However, whether it is true or not that such periods existed in the past, it is a waste of time brooding over the past because the past is gone, and it’s gone.

Face the reality of your moment. Accept your present season. Embrace the opportunities it offers. **Isaiah 60:1** informs us “It is the time for you to arise, shine; this is the season your light is meant for; the glory of God is about to rise upon you.” **Ecclesiastes 7:10** (NLT) says, “Don’t long for ‘the good old days,’ for you don’t know whether they were any better than today.” Don’t live in the past.

There are others who do nothing today, because of their belief that tomorrow will be better than today. It’s what you do today that determines your tomorrow. In a way, there is nothing like tomorrow, because when it comes, we call it today. Today is the tomorrow you spoke about yesterday. Today is your best day, your best week, your best month, your best year. This is the right attitude to have rather than engaging in wishful thinking.

Jesus taught his disciples to pray, “Give us this day our daily bread” (**Matthew 6:11 NKJV**). Face today; make the most of its opportunities, and you’ll be creating a glorious tomorrow for yourself.

**2. Avoid Procrastination.** As it is often said, procrastination is the thief of Time and Destiny. Don't postpone till another time or day what you should do today. My parents uses to say "Make hay while the sun shines." Notice what **Luke 9:62 (MSG)** says, "Jesus said, 'No procrastination. No backward looks. You can't put God's kingdom off till tomorrow. Seize the day.'"

**Matthew 6:33 (NKJV)** "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

Are there other things you're convinced you're supposed to do but you've been procrastinating, postponing doing them? This is one sure way to regret later in life. Don't postpone till tomorrow what is better done today.

**3. Reject Laziness and Excuses.** Laziness and excuses are twins. Laziness doesn't make people do anything or do enough. If you don't want to do anything in life, you'll have enough excuses. If you are going to make the most of your opportunities, you must overcome laziness and excuses. **Proverbs 22:13 (NKJV)** "The lazy man says, 'There is a lion outside! I shall be slain in the streets!'" The New Living Translation renders it thus: I like what the **New Living Translations** says "The lazy person is full of excuses, saying, 'If I go outside, I might meet a lion in the street and be killed!'" How did he know? What an excuse! The lion only existed in his imagination.

**Proverbs 26:13-16 (NKJV)** tells us more about the lazy: "The lazy man says, 'There is a lion in the road! A fierce lion is in the streets!' As a door turns on its hinges, so does the lazy man on his bed. The lazy man buries his hand in the bowl; it wearies him to bring it back to his mouth. The lazy man is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who can answer sensibly."

Hard work is a constant requirement for success in life. According to **Lamentation 3:27 (NCV)** "It is good for someone to work hard while he is young."

Why? “*Because the glory of young men is their strength...*” (Proverbs 20:29a NLT). Why should a young person waste away his youthful strength in unproductive endeavors?

Proverbs 12:24 (MSG) “*The diligent find freedom in their work; the lazy are oppressed by work.*” In other words, hard work will give the diligent upper hand in life, and the lazy will become a slave to the diligent. Proverbs 13:4 (NKJV) also says, “*The soul of a lazy man desires, and has nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made rich.*” Success doesn’t come by dreaming only. After you’ve dreamed, you must set out to execute your dream. Proverbs 12:27 (NKJV) “*The lazy man does not roast what he took in hunting, but diligence is man’s precious possession.*” Devote yourself to hard work; don’t let laziness steal your opportunities. Ecclesiastes 11:6 NLT) “*Be sure to stay busy and plant a variety of crops, for you never know which will grow — perhaps they all will.*”

Paul said when he came to the city of Troas to preach the Good News of Christ, the Lord gave him “**tremendous opportunities**” That is all the Lord would do. It was his responsibility to take advantage of these tremendous opportunities. If he liked, he could make excuses why he couldn’t do what he should do. Laziness and excuses are part of the reasons people waste tremendous opportunities. Be alert!

In Colossians 4:3 (NLT) Paul also said, “*Don’t forget to pray for us, too, that God will give us many opportunities to preach about his secret plan — that Christ is also for you Gentiles.*” It is one thing to pray for opportunities and another thing to fully utilize them. You must ensure that you don’t waste the opportunities that God brings to you in answer to prayer.

**4. Don’t Concentrate on the Problem; Focus on the Opportunities.** A lot of people don’t make the most of their opportunities because they’re looking for a perfect condition. Unfortunately, there is no perfect condition. Every good opportunity also comes with its own challenges.

Businesses which yield high returns, also come with high risks. When married women get pregnant, that's a thing of joy for them. But carrying a baby in the womb for nine months is not easy. Many women must endure pain and discomfort until they're delivered of their babies.

Don't let the problems associated with the opportunities discourage you from seizing your opportunities. **Ecclesiastes 11:4** (NLT) says, "*If you wait for perfect conditions, you will never get anything done.*" If you want to possess your Promised Land, you must realize that the **giants are already there!** (**Numbers 13:33**). You will have to contend with them to possess it. If you're afraid to fight the giants, you only have a pipe dream (self-delusion) of possessing your Promised Land.

**Conclusion:** Don't forget the four points I have limited myself to in this message: Forget about yesterday; face today. Avoid procrastination. Reject laziness and excuses. Don't concentrate on the problem; focus on the opportunities.

Prepare for your God-given opportunities and utilize them, because poor preparation precedes poor performance. Don't depend on luck. The more you prayerfully prepare and implement your plans, the "Blessed" you'll become. As you go out each day, be sensitive to your opportunities. When you prepare, divine opportunities come your way; when you prepare, you provoke divine opportunities.

Maybe you missed or wasted some opportunities in the past, don't cry over that. All hope is not lost for you. Ask for God's forgiveness and mercy. God, in His mercy, will open new doors of opportunities for you again, and ensure you make the most of them. It shall be well with you in Jesus' name.