



## BREAKING THE ICE

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What is your idea of exercise? Are you a gym member, do you follow workout videos or do you prefer to do your own thing at home?

This year, during quarantine, did you pick up any new exercise habits?

## MAIN CONTENT

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As we continue our study of Colossians, we pick up knowing Paul is outwardly wasting away. Physically, his body is taking a beating. But inwardly, he is growing stronger and encouraging other followers of Jesus to persevere.

1. Who has been an encourager in your life? What is the most encouraging thing they have said to you?
2. Have you ever had a time where you felt like you were spiritually wasting away? What happened?

This week Pastor Kevin talks about spiritual gains. We can gain physically as we work out in the gym but in order for us to have spiritual gains, we need to do a few things.

Read Colossians 1:24- 2:5

In this section of scripture, Paul gives us the secret to inward renewal and spiritual growth, spiritual gains. If you are in Christ, if He lives in you and if you trust Him for your spiritual growth, you have the secret.

If you want to grow in your faith it takes effort over a period of time. That effort is multiplied by God's power and grace and produces spiritual maturity in us.

3. How have you seen your spiritual maturity grow over the years?

One way we gain strength is through suffering. No one wants to suffer, especially after what 2020 has

# MAIN CONTENT

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brought us. Often time, we want to run from suffering and numb it with what the world offers. But Jesus wants to help us with our suffering. He sympathizes with us in our weakness. He runs to us in our weakness.

When we are going through suffering God wants to dignify the trial we are going through. We need to ask God, “what do you want to teach me? How can I become more like Christ through this?”

4. Where have you seen God dignify the trial through suffering in your life? What did you learn from the trial and how did you grow to be more like Christ through the trial?

When we hold onto Jesus in our suffering, it matures us and grows us. We gain wisdom through His word. Pastor Kevin said, “Spiritual maturity isn’t about how much Bible you know, it’s about how you live. That’s wisdom.”

We live in a world full of information but lacking in wisdom. God gave us wisdom through the Bible. When we read His word, obey it and live according to it, we gain wisdom. The more time we spend with God, the more He renews our mind and gives us wisdom.

5. Where have you experienced God’s wisdom in your life?

We gain encouragement through others. We need other people. We were created for relationship. When you look at the New Testament scriptures, many of the books were written to groups of people. God wants us to gather together, read scriptures, care for and love one another.

People who encourage others and love others well, contend for one another. They fight for each other. When we contend for one another, Christ dwells in us and we grow in spiritual maturity.

6. Who do you contend for in your life? How have you seen your faith grow as you contend for others?

Spiritually mature people put others above themselves.

7. Where have you seen someone put you above them in your life? How did/does that make you feel?

When we put others above ourselves, we are representing Jesus. He came to put every single person above Him. He loves us so much He died for us. He is there for us in times of struggle, He has given us His word for wisdom to apply to our lives, and given us the opportunity to surround ourselves with others to help pray and contend for us.

# PRAYER

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Jesus, thank you for loving us. Thank you for giving us your word for us to live by. Help us gain wisdom from it to live our lives and show others your love and care for them. Help us be like you. Show us the things in our lives that keep us from following you closely. Surround us with others who can encourage us in our journey to follow you. Help us contend for others and love them as you love us. Amen.

# ACTION STEPS

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- + This week, pray and ask God to show you who needs encouragement this week. Send them a text or call them.
- + If you are going through a tough season, sit down and write out when God has brought you through a tough time before. Think about His goodness and how He helped you in the past, ask Him to help you now.
- + Continue reading along in Colossians. Write down any scriptures that speak to you and ask God to help