



Episode 007: What is the Kairos Course? Show Notes

Ron Brown has served for 26 years in Africa with the Christian and Missionary Alliance. He is now a missions coach and consultant in Calgary, Alberta. Ron is a senior associate at the Jaffray Centre for Global Initiatives, one of the founding sponsors of the Global Missions Podcast. Ron Brown sits on the National Coordination Team for the Kairos course. At the time of the interview, Ron Brown was serving as the Interim National Coordinator for Kairos Canada.

What brought you to be passionate about missions?

- Ron was raised by missionary parents in Central Africa. Watching his parents serve as missionaries, connecting with the nations, had a great effect on him.
- In his own studies of the Scriptures, he developed a greater understanding of God's heart for the nations and became passionate about becoming involved himself. This drew him back to Africa, along with his wife, Myra, as missionaries in 1980.
- You can learn more about Ron's journey in missions in his autobiography, *Intersections*.

Some of our listeners have heard of the Kairos course. Others have not. Can you give us a brief overview of what the Kairos course is about?

- Kairos is a discipleship course with a missions twist. It helps participants understand God's heart for the nations. As we look through scripture we see that missions really is the basis of the Bible. It also asks, "How can we be involved in this today?"

What does the word Kairos mean?

- It's the Greek word for "an appointed time" or "a unique moment in history."

The course outline is divided into four sections. Perhaps you could take a minute to describe each of those sections and how they contribute to the overall purpose?

- There are 9 units of study in the Kairos course divided into four parts:
 - **Biblical** – Starts by looking at the Abrahamic Covenant where God says, “I will bless you so that you will bless the nations.” God has chosen a group of people to bring God’s redeeming story to the nations. It traces this through the Old Testament and then into the New Testament and how we see this in Jesus’ ministry on earth.
 - **Historical** – Shows how the acts of God continue through history and we see how the mission force has extended through three eras - the coastlands, then inland activities and now the focus on unreached people groups
 - **Strategic** – This talks about the need to find the right goals, the right places and the right methods to do missionary work today. It points out that there is a certain imbalance in how we are resourcing the mission movement today. We have a lot of resources, both human and financial, working in reached areas that have a viable church rather than sending money and people to unreached people groups. There are 6900 unreached people groups in the world today.
 - **Cultural** – This helps the learner think through the different cultures of the world and how we need to be culturally aware. It helps us to guard against ethnocentrism and gives us tools for sharing the gospel cross culturally whether that is overseas or in our own neighbourhoods.

How is this course delivered?

- It is delivered through churches.
- It is non-denominational and aims to bring different denominations together.
- The goal is for the average person in church today to attend this course.
- It can be taken for credit at some institutions through the Jaffray Centre for Global Initiatives.

How would you respond to people who might say, “I am not called to missions, so Kairos is not for me”?

- This course is not designed to make you a missionary.
- This is a discipleship course that helps me to live as a Christian and to know what God’s heart is for redeeming this world. It is for each Christian, regardless of their call.
- It helps us understand that we are all salt and light wherever God has placed us.



- It moves people into being more intentional about connecting with the nations as they arrive in our neighbourhoods and cities. It would hopefully encourage you to be the first person to welcome people from around the world wherever you may run into them, be that in your school, your office or your neighbourhood.

What is the cost commitment and time investment involved?

- The course costs \$150. Some pay out of pocket but some churches sponsor their leaders to take the course.
- There are scholarships available to students.
- There are a number of different formats. There are 9 units and each unit takes 2.5 hours. Some churches run a 9 week course, meeting once a week. Other churches have chosen to condense the course into 3 weekends. Others offer a 1 week intensive format.
- Some mission agencies have started using this as a requirement to serve with the mission organization.
- There is a certain flexibility to find out what works best for the hosting church and the intended audience.

How does the Kairos course differ from the Perspectives course?

- Perspectives has been around much longer than Kairos but they are both from the same family.
- Perspectives was developed in the 1970s in response to students from Urbana who needed training in mission. It covers the same four categories as Kairos.
- Perspectives is most often taken by university students.
- The Kairos course grew out of a need in the Philippines in 1994 who adapted the Perspectives course to mobilize the Filipino church for the sake of the nations.
- The Kairos course has a 30 minute block in each unit of time in a small group where two questions are asked:
 - What is God saying to me through this unit?
 - How will I live differently tomorrow because of it?
- Kairos is very focused on integrating the learning into your daily life.
- The two courses complement each other.

If there was a church who was interested in hosting Kairos, what is their next step?

- Visit Kairoscourse.org – This is the international website that has a lot of information about the course – what it is, it’s history and its mission statement. It also has a two minute introduction video that can be used for promotional purposes in a church.

- Visit Kairoscourse.ca – Here you will find contact information for regional coordinators and you will find courses that are already being held across Canada. There are new courses being put up all the time. You can also see all the different formats that have been used.

What is the impact of the Kairos course in Canada?

- Kairos is new to Canada having started in 2012.
- It is happening in 80 countries around the world and has been translated into 30 languages. In Canada, it is offered in Cantonese, Korean, English and French.
- It impacts people in different ways.
- One woman who took the course, realized that she had never reached out to the New Canadian woman who she frequently saw working in a convenience store in her neighbourhood. She began to ask this woman questions and developed a friendship. Both women started to host each other in their homes. One day the woman from the convenience store phoned her up and said, “Today is my birthday and in my country we phone our best friend on our birthday.”
- Another woman who took the course realized that there was a struggling church in their city that probably needs help. Although she was comfortable at her current church, she decided she could have a greater impact and interact with people from other parts of the world by attending this struggling church and so she made the switch and became involved in the struggling, inner city church.
- Another man said that his prayer life changed because of the course. Instead of asking God to bless him and his family, he felt that he should be praying for the nations, asking for God’s kingdom to come around the world.
- Another family felt God calling them to Central Asia. The man stepped down from his position as lead pastor of a church and have moved to Central Asia to be missionaries.

If people would like to learn more, how can they contact you?

- Email Ron at ronbrown@ambrose.edu
- Visit www.globalvault.ca
- www.ronaldbrown.ca

