

CBTE FOR STUDENTS

When you are thinking about enrolling with Kairos or are just starting your program, take a few moments to consider why. Why this program? Why now? When the answers to these questions come from a deep desire to know God and to invest in the learning and growth required for you to flourish in your vocation, it will be a help to you in your educational journey.

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ASSUME THIS WILL BE VERY DIFFERENT

Over the past ten years, Kairos has grown from a small group of students and faculty who were wondering if there might be a different way to think about theological education into a global community of over 4,000 people on six different continents.

We are a community that speaks dozens of languages, faithfully follows Jesus Christ in a multitude of cultures and contexts, and seeks to proclaim the Gospel in word and deed. The community has become a global network with churches, ministries, businesses, schools, denominations, mental health clinics, and more all working together to develop a system of theological education that is affordable, accessible, relevant, and faithful.

As someone who has been on this journey from the beginning, one of the aspects of this community that is most interesting to me is how it has grown organically. We did not set out to create a global network with thousands of people around the world coming together to follow Jesus. Quite the opposite. We set out to quietly experiment with a revolutionary approach to theological education. One that would require us to let go of our long-held methods of teaching and structuring educational journeys.

At the heart of this experiment was a deep desire to place Jesus at the center of our work – not the institution. By focusing on stewarding followers of Jesus, we felt we should become more aware of the things we were doing as an institution that were unhelpful – even harmful – to those we served.

Along the way, we learned many things. For example, we learned that most of the assumptions we tend to make as modern “institutions of higher education” needed to be reconsidered. Everything from the things taking place in a classroom to the sidewalks outside the building needed to be placed under the microscope. In practice, this meant we needed to “fix something every day” as one of our team members often says. We also learned that the interaction between faculty and students is vital. If we were to adhere to the “faithful” part of creating a system that is “affordable, accessible, relevant, and faithful,” we could not diminish the importance of student and faculty interactions.

At the same time, however, we discerned a need to more highly value other aspects of a student’s journey. We needed to create space for the student’s local community of faith to be more engaged, and we needed to empower students to recognize the important formation that happens outside of the classroom. We also learned that we needed to create ways for “credit hours” and “courses” and “tuition” to be something that served, or were submitted to, the journey of discipleship. That is to say, we needed to rethink the structures and processes by which each of these were part of a student’s journey.

Over the course of nearly 10 years of following the leading of Spirit down this path we now call Kairos, we have

changed nearly everything. Perhaps the only thing that hasn't changed is that the bookshelves that were in my office when I first arrived are still there. Everything else has changed.

But How Does This Impact You As A Student?

Well, as we have grown over the years, more and more people are discovering Kairos because it has appeared in an online search or because someone mentioned it in passing (compared to before when most heard about us from someone they know and trust). In practice, this means that when many people enroll, they don't know too much about how or why Kairos works. Perhaps this is true about you but maybe it isn't. Either way, I think you might find this white paper quite helpful. We are going to highlight a series of questions that new students might want to consider as they begin their program with Kairos or perhaps these are good questions to consider before enrolling in any program.

Over the last number of years, I think there is one thing that has been true for everyone who has become part of the community. Whether you are a partner organization, student, mentor, member of the faculty, staff, or board, the common theme is that everyone should assume their experience in Kairos will be very different from anything they have experienced before. For some, this is invigorating. For others, this can sound daunting.

Whether you are a student who is invigorated by the possibility of joining a revolution in theological education or someone that is a bit intimidated by the idea that your educational journey will be more organic than precise, I think you will appreciate this blog series. Our goal is to help you gain a deeper picture of what it means to invite Kairos to walk with you as you follow Jesus and flourish in your vocation. That means we will suggest a few questions to consider when beginning your program or discerning if Kairos is right for you. It also means we will provide a few resources to help students make progress in their program. [Back to top.](#)

WHY AM I HERE?

While we know your time at Kairos can be a fun, engaging, transformative, and life-giving journey, we also know that it might be challenging, frustrating, and confusing at times too. Because your journey is unique to you and customized to your context, vocation, and needs, we can't tell you exactly what you will experience. But we can share some thoughts that we have gleaned from our experience working with students who have taken the journey before you.

One thing we have learned is that it is important, and helpful, to develop a clear understanding of why you are "here." By this, we mean that prior to enrolling, or at least before you get too deep in your journey with Kairos, it will be helpful to reflect on why you are engaging in theological education. If your first answer to this question

is “I need a degree,” we invite you to take some time to think more deeply about this particular journey. Let us explain.

Degrees are important. In some cases, they are even required for certain careers or professions. Ideally, a seminary degree offers the opportunity to gain a deeper knowledge of the work that an individual is seeking to do, but it would also be a time of guidance in faithful living and personal growth. Yes, degrees are important. At the same time, however, there are many accredited, reputable, and biblically-rooted schools in which you can enroll and “get a degree.” There are schools that have lower tuition than Kairos, even several you can attend for free. There are even other seminaries that offer affordable competency-based degree programs. So why choose Kairos? Why has God led you to any particular program instead of another one?

Every degree program has its own emphases. Kairos is focused on melding a robust journey of discipleship with academic engagement. Your journey through a program with Kairos will invite you to weave your education into your current vocational context so that your educational work is deeply relevant. Kairos will challenge you to take the reins of your education and craft a pathway to demonstrate proficiency in your program’s outcomes with the guidance of a team of mentors. This unique blend of distinctives necessarily involves a process of growing into the program – it takes time and patience, but we have found that it is worth the effort, and the process is transformative. This transformation process will require more of you than simply reading books, submitting assignments, and passing classes. You will need to be open to what God wants to teach you and responsive to the insights provided by your community, context, and mentor team. What we are saying here is that through Kairos you will do more than earn a degree. You will be invited to thoughtfully and intentionally deepen your knowledge of what it means to be a faithful follower of Jesus.

In Kairos, there may be times when you struggle to understand what it means to discern, develop, and demonstrate proficiency in one of your degree program outcomes. As you begin your journey, you may find it difficult to identify and invite individuals to serve on your mentor team. You may feel, at times, like your prior learning isn’t being honored as much as it should be. You may feel that your progress is slower than you want it to be. Put simply, there will be times when things are not going as well as you would like them to go. If you are here for the sole purpose of earning a degree, these times can be very discouraging. Our invitation, however, is to embrace the ups and downs of this journey as you work toward the completion of your program, accepting that Kairos has more in common with backpacking through Europe than it does with a pre-arranged bus tour.

When you are thinking about enrolling with Kairos or are just starting your program, take a few moments to consider why. Why this program? Why now? Why do I feel led to engage in theological education? When the answers to these questions come from a deep desire to know God and to invest in the learning and growth required for you to flourish in your vocation, it will be a help to you in your educational journey. [Back to top.](#)

WHERE AM I GOING?

When you are thinking about joining Kairos or when you are first beginning your journey, it can be helpful to consider a few important questions. We already shared the first question which was “Why am I here?” With that question, we asked you to reflect on why you want to begin a program and call attention to the fact that your journey through a program with Kairos will be different from educational experiences you have had in the past. If you aren’t interested in expanding or deepening your understanding of God and of the invitation to participate in God’s work, then you may find Kairos frustrating at times.

Now, we are going to look at the next question which is, “Where am I going?”

When trying to compare the Kairos journey to traditional educational processes, we said that it is a bit more like backpacking through Europe than a pre-arranged bus tour. On a pre-arranged bus tour, you are going to be more passive than active. The tour guide and bus driver have a specific schedule and pre-determined stops along the way, and their goal is to provide the same experience for everyone who comes on the tour – every time. When you are backpacking through Europe, the journey still has particular destinations but the path you take is much more flexible. Among other things, you have the freedom to set the pace, choose which waypoints you might visit along the way to your destination, and consider who might come with you on that journey.

Your journey through a program with Kairos has similar aspects. The destinations are the various program outcomes. You get to invite some mentors to join you along the way and the particular path you take will be unique to you. Given that conceptualization of the journey, it might seem odd for us to ask the question “Where are you going?” because it seems as though the destination has already been determined – your destinations are the outcomes.

When we are asking the question “where are you going” we are inviting you to reflect on those outcomes. What do they mean? Are they destinations you wish to visit? How do those destinations fit with your reasons for enrolling in the program in the first place? It is an invitation to think about where this journey will take you, why you want to go there, and whether or not this journey will indeed get you where you want to go. For example, if you want to pursue a career in software engineering, the destinations (i.e., the outcomes) you pursue should help to move you in that direction. If you want to integrate your faith with your work as a real estate agent, the outcomes should provide an opportunity for that to occur. The list could go on. If you are enrolling in Kairos simply to grow in your faith or pursue ordination or develop and hone church planting skills – the outcomes need to help you with that.

One of the best aspects of Kairos is that you can customize the journey you are taking so that it helps you flourish in your vocation. We have had pastors, church planters, missionaries, fighter pilots, real estate brokers, doctors, firefighters, retirees, worship leaders, therapists, and much more graduate from Kairos.

As you begin, take some time to think about where you are going. This will help you think about the degree program you may want to pursue, the adaptations you may want to make, and, perhaps most importantly, what it means to flourish.

The point about flourishing is an important one. As you probably noted on our website, we often use the phrase “follow Jesus, flourish in your vocation.” Our hope is that in your time with Kairos you will grow in your knowledge of God and develop proficiency that will help you flourish in your daily life as a follower of Jesus.

The word “flourishing” can be somewhat confusing because often we haven’t spent time thinking about what that means. As you begin your journey with Kairos, we invite you to take that time – to think about what it means to flourish in your vocation – because your answers to that question will inform the path you take.

For example, if you hope to pursue ordination in a particular denomination after earning your Master of Divinity, it will be helpful to think about what is required for ordination in that denomination. Do you need to demonstrate proficiency in Greek and Hebrew? Are there certain theological topics or movements within particular Christian traditions you need to study? Are there certain types of people that need to be involved in your journey? Other questions to consider could be ones like: Are there certain skills, attitudes, or dispositions that characterize someone who is flourishing? How is success defined within the denomination? Do you share that definition of success?

Similar questions could be asked if you are pursuing a degree to develop or hone your leadership skills as a business or nonprofit leader. Do you need to demonstrate proficiency in certain areas (e.g., strategic thinking, budgeting, etc.)? Are there certain topics that are important (e.g., conflict resolution, communication, faith-based economics, etc.)?

The point is that the questions “where are going?” and “why are you here?” are deeply interconnected. There is an unending array of topics you could study or skills you could develop while on your journey with Kairos. We are inviting you to give some thought to the idea that your goals should inform your path. When you have your goals in mind, you can more easily know when you have arrived (i.e., finished).

When you are backpacking through Europe, you begin with a map, some waypoints or destinations, and some idea of how you will know that you have arrived at those destinations. The same is true for your journey through a program with Kairos. You have a map and some destinations (the outcomes). You need to do some

thinking to articulate how you will know when you have arrived at those destinations. [Back to top.](#)

WHERE HAVE I BEEN?

In his book, “You Are What You Love,” James K.A. Smith calls attention to the idea that each of us is shaped and formed by many things – experiences, people, daily practices, etc. The list could go on forever. One way to think about this in simple terms is to recognize that where we have been has an impact on where we might go and how we might progress through that journey.

While those ideas shared by Smith are helpful, it can be a bit overwhelming to try and answer the question “Where have you been?” That seems like an awfully big question. There are so many different directions to go with that question. To help you, here are a few specific questions or areas of reflection that students have found particularly helpful over the years.

What experiences have led me to enroll in a program with Kairos?

The experiences that have led you to consider and/or enroll in a program are important. Often, they provide the intrinsic motivation required to succeed in one of our degree programs. What are those experiences for you? Did something in your walk with Christ spark a desire to grow in your faith and earn a degree? Maybe you were recently asked to lead something and feel you need some support to do that well.

Where have I already been and what have I learned?

No one enters Kairos with a blank slate. That is to say that you are starting this journey with some level of experience, knowledge, etc. Take a few moments to reflect on what that might be. When you do, however, be intentional about identifying what you have learned – not simply what you have done. For example, don’t write down, “I have been a pastor for eight years” or “I am a certified financial planner” or “I have completed several training sessions for my job.” Simply listing the task that you have completed or the work that you have done is not the same thing as listing what you have learned. If you have significant experience in leadership, what have you learned from that experience? Perhaps it is something about working with people or building strategy or working with others. If you need a guide for what to think about, consider looking at the outcomes we list for the program you are considering. For example, you could review the outcomes for the Master of Divinity listed in the “program breakdown” section of this page. What have you learned in those areas? Who has watched you learn those things and could vouch for the fact that you have learned them? What experiences have helped you learn them?

What questions am I bringing with me on this journey?

Just like no one comes with a blank slate, no one comes as a finished product, either. What do you hope to learn? Where do you need to grow? What breaks your heart and how will this journey through Kairos help you along the way? If you don't come with any questions, that is to say, if you are not entering Kairos with some level of openness or curiosity you will struggle throughout the program. What do you hope God shows you while you are on this journey? What questions are driving your desire to think deeply about what it means to follow Jesus and flourish in your vocation?

What story is shaping me?

Finally, take a few moments to think about what story or stories have influenced your life. For example, have you spent time in churches within a particular denomination or tradition (e.g., Baptist, Lutheran, Non-denominational, etc.)? Are there certain aspects of where you have lived that have had an impact on you (e.g., a particular geographic area)? Have you lived in urban, rural, or suburban settings? For example, if you are a Latino mother who is active in your local non-denominational church, run a business in Los Angeles, CA, and have always lived in the urban settings of southern California, your story and the impact it has had on you is going to be much different than if you were a young, single dad who has always lived in rural Illinois and attended United Methodist churches. As you begin, it is helpful to reflect on your story and how it has influenced you because those questions will be important as you progress through the program. While you work through the various outcomes in Kairos, you will be asked to think critically about what proficiency looks like in your context and to think about your particular experience of the Christian faith and how it interacts with or differs from others. To answer these questions, it is helpful to first take time to think about your own story.

Your journey through Kairos is the next step in your walk with Christ – the next chapter of your story. Thinking about where you have been will give you a better understanding of where you need to go and why you began. It will also give you insight into where to begin your journey. [Back to top.](#)

HOW DO I BEGIN?

When a student first begins the journey through a program with Kairos, it is often the first time she or he has had the opportunity to set their pace, direction, and approach to learning. In most cases elsewhere, when a student enters a program, she or he is given a list of courses that must be completed in a certain order (e.g., a degree plan), within a particular schedule (e.g., weekly class sessions during a semester), and using a specific modality (e.g., an online or onsite class).

Within Kairos, you have the opportunity to consider an array of options for how you make progress in the program. The pace, style, and organization of your learning journey can be set by you! We call this “student centered.” We have built an educational structure that puts students first. While each program has a defined list of outcomes (i.e., areas of integrated learning in which each student must demonstrate proficiency), how and where you begin, as well as the path you take to develop and demonstrate proficiency, can be defined by you.

While this can be exciting, it can also be a bit intimidating. There is a lot to learn and demonstrate in a degree program. As you start your journey through Kairos, it can be helpful to reflect a bit on where you might start. Here are a few questions to consider:

What are you most (or least) excited about?

In an earlier article in this series about questions to consider, we mentioned that it is important to reflect on why you began this program in the first place. If you have a deeper “why” behind enrolling in a particular program, that is often a great catalyst for thinking about where to begin. To put it another way, sometimes the best place to start is with something you are excited about. Take a look at the outcomes listed for your program. Which one is most interesting to you? Is it biblical studies? Theology? Leadership? Something else? Work with your mentor team to chart out a path for diving into an area that you are most interested in exploring.

Some students, however, find it helpful to start in an area that is the least interesting. In this approach, students are moving the “big rocks” out of the way. In our experience, this tends to open up new doors for learning. It can be great to start with stuff that could be difficult because it might be a way to learn about something new!

Where do you need to grow?

Sometimes, the best place to begin is wherever you most want to grow. For example, if you are leading a business and feel like you need to grow in the area of leadership or financial management, then perhaps the best place to begin might be to study and practice in the area of leadership. If you don’t feel like you need to grow in any particular area, I might suggest you think a bit more deeply. All of us need to grow. Ask your mentors if they have suggestions for where you need to grow and then be open to their suggestions. By starting with an area in which you feel the need for growth, you will often be more self-motivated – which is very helpful in Kairos.

What is your preferred method of learning?

Now that you have an idea of where you’d like to begin, take some time to reflect on how you might like to engage in that learning process. Do you learn best by doing something (e.g., “on-the-job kind of learning)? Do

you prefer to read and then discuss what you've read? Watch videos? Listen to audiobooks or podcasts? Write? What kind of learning experiences are you naturally drawn toward?

You may not be fully aware of how you learn best, and that is okay. Most of us struggle to know exactly how we learn. Often, how we learn best is dictated by the type of thing we are trying to learn. For example, if we are trying to learn how to ride a bike, we are going to learn best by doing it. You can't "read" your way into learning how to ride a bike. Nonetheless, some of us have more natural ways of gathering and analyzing information. For example, I prefer auditory learning experiences if I am studying something like theology. What about you? Do you like traditional learning experiences that occur over the course of several weeks and are guided by a traditional syllabus? Or do you prefer focused learning experiences that invite you to explore a specific topic for a short period of time? Do you like to be in a cohort with others learning the same thing or do you prefer asynchronous learning? There are many options. Take some time to think about what might be the most intriguing or helpful for you.

How do you like to communicate?

Finally, take some time to think about how you like to communicate. Consider the rhythm and modality. For example, do you prefer email? Text messaging? Videoconferencing? Phone calls? What about the rhythm? Do you like to be in frequent communication, or do you prefer to check in with someone periodically? Also, do you have a preferred method for how you communicate what you are learning? Some people like to write papers. Others like to demonstrate learning in some sort of tangible fashion. Still, others love creative or artistic expressions of learning coupled with a conversation about their meaning. While in the program, you will no doubt use several types of communication. You won't finish the program with just text messaging. However, you can influence the modality and frequency of communication. What might work well for you?

As you begin your journey through Kairos, you have the opportunity to shape the pace, style, and organization of your learning. Take some time to think about how that might work best for you. By doing this at the beginning, you will set the stage for greater success later in the program. [Back to top](#).

WHO IS COMING WITH ME?

In case you haven't noticed yet, I will begin by noting that your journey with Kairos is, first and foremost, a journey of discipleship. Yes, we award degrees and invite students to think deeply and work diligently. We believe, however, that such work and study is a natural result of a robust and intentional journey of discipleship. As such, it is something that must be done in community. You cannot make progress through your Kairos journey alone. You will interact with other students, people in your local context and community of faith, faculty, and mentors. Given that reality, it is important for you to take some time to think about who is coming with you on this journey.

You also need to think about what you need to bring along with you. That is to say, you need to consider what resources you might need along the way. These could be resources related to your goals following graduation (e.g., if you hope to be ordained in a particular denomination then you may need some resources related to that process) or they could be resources that you know you will need in order to make progress (e.g., financial plans, time, academic assistance, etc.).

Taking some time to think about who and what you will need along the way is a good way to gain clarity about the process. That clarity will give you the momentum you need to start well and then be supported along the way. Let's jump into a few specific aspects of each one.

Who is coming with me?

I think there are three important aspects of this question to consider: 1) the Kairos community, 2) your context, and 3) your mentor team.

It is helpful to reflect on the Kairos community as a whole because you will interact with this larger community in important ways. Each program requires students to engage in small-group conversations with other students several times over the course of the program. Such conversations may take place inside of large-group events (e.g., Kairos gatherings), seminar-style experiences, or other live learning experiences. You will be expected to interact with other students in these settings and to do so with grace, humility, and respect. At some point, you may bump into another student, mentor, or faculty member whose opinions and ideas are significantly different from yours. Such differences are opportunities for learning and growth. With a community that stretches across six continents and over 70 Christian denominations, you should expect there to be differences of opinion. At Kairos, we are centered on the person and work of Jesus Christ and the unshakeable truth of God's Word. Each person who begins a program does so by expressing a desire to be a more faithful follower of Jesus. This commitment to following Jesus is an invitation to study deeply and to hold convictions while doing so with something we call "epistemic humility." You can read more about this in our white paper on theological hospitality.

Along with the Kairos community, your journey will include your local context and faith community. Susan Reese, Professor of Spiritual Formation, makes this clear when she points out that your primary classroom is anywhere you place your hand on a doorknob and proceed to walk into a room – that place is your classroom and your community of learning. It could be your office, the sanctuary at your church, your kitchen, or even your neighbor's house. Everywhere you go presents an opportunity to learn. As you begin your journey, you will be invited to think about how you will integrate your context and local community into this journey. Obviously, at the beginning of your journey, you won't know exactly how that will work. It is important, however, to be aware of the fact that you will be invited to engage your context and community in your journey. You won't be able to walk through this experience alone.

Finally, you will work with mentors throughout your entire journey. One of your mentors will be a faculty member of Kairos University. The other mentors on your team could be from your vocational context, faith community, group of peers, or others in your personal network. Every program requires engaging with mentors. As you consider or begin your program, embrace this opportunity to work with mentors. It is a wonderful opportunity to invite others to speak into your life. It is also a great way to ensure that you are receiving

multiple perspectives along the way.

What information or support do I need?

People choose to enroll in Kairos for many reasons, and they serve in many different contexts. Some are pastors, church planters, or missionaries and others are business leaders, volunteers, parents, chaplains, and much more. To put it simply, everyone's journey through Kairos is different and often requires students to think differently about what they will need along the way. In our experience, there are a few particular areas to consider when thinking about resources you might need along the way: communication, community, and information.

When it comes to communication, the context in which you serve, or plan to serve, plays a big role in determining the type and style of communication you may need to utilize. For example, if you serve as a teaching pastor at a church, your spoken communication could be very important. However, if you are an academic who is planning to conduct research for the purpose of publication, it could be that a particular style of written communication is important. In most cases, you need to consider what kind(s) of verbal and written communication is needed to be proficient in your context. As you begin, take some time to work with your mentor team to discern and define your needs. If you discover that a certain type of communication is expected in your vocational context and you currently struggle in that area, then it may be helpful to identify some resources that will help you along the way. For example, if verbal communication is challenging, then perhaps you and your mentor team can help you find resources to support you in that area. Likewise, if written communication or even a particular type of written communication is important, then identify some resources to assist you. Remember, resources can be books, podcasts, websites, people, learning experiences, and much more.

As for community, it is helpful to remember (again) that you are not doing this alone. You will be expected to engage with others along the way. Previously, I mentioned the importance of bringing some people with you (i.e., your mentor team, local context, community of faith, etc.). Here, I want to call attention to resources that might be important to your community. For example, if you plan to serve as a pastor in a particular denomination, it will be helpful to gather information that the denomination provides regarding ordination or pastoral leadership. If you serve as a business leader, perhaps there are particular standards within your field that are important to understand. The point is to remember that you are serving within a community. Take some time to identify the resources that your community deems important.

Finally, think about how you might access information and whether or not you will need help doing so. We often have access to more information than we need or even know what to do with. It can be difficult, however, to assess which information is relevant or needed for a particular task. This is what some people refer to as "information literacy." It is the ability to find and evaluate information (in all its various forms) coupled with the ability to organize it, use it appropriately and ethically, and then communicate it. If this sounds new to you, it may be helpful to work with your mentor team to gain a deeper appreciation for the concept of information literacy and then identify a few resources to help you with that. Again, resources could be people, websites, learning experiences, etc.

Who and what you bring along for your Kairos journey will play an important role in your ongoing development. As a follower of Jesus, you have the privilege of being part of a global community of disciples seeking to

follow Jesus more faithfully. As you begin that journey, take some time to think about who and what you want to bring along! [Back to top](#).

SERIES CLOSING

We began by noting that one of the most interesting aspects of this community is how it has grown organically. We did not set out to create a global network with thousands of people around the world coming together to follow Jesus. Quite the opposite. We set out to quietly experiment with a revolutionary approach to theological education. One that would require us to let go of our long-held methods of teaching and structuring educational journeys. At the heart of this experiment was a deep desire to place Jesus at the center of our work – not the institution. By focusing on stewarding followers of Jesus, we focused on becoming more aware of the things we were doing as an institution that were unhelpful – even harmful – to those we served. As a result, a journey with Kairos is going to be different than what many people have experienced before.

When starting such a journey, it is helpful to ask why. Why are you here? Why Kairos? Why this program? Another way to put it might be, “What is God doing in your life that brought you to Kairos and how will this journey deepen your relationship with Jesus as you flourish in your vocation? One thing we have learned is that it is important, and helpful, to develop a clear understanding of why you are “here.” By this, we mean that prior to enrolling, or at least before you get too deep in your journey with Kairos, it will be helpful to reflect on why you are engaging in theological education. If your first answer to this question is “I need a degree,” we invite you to take some time to think more deeply about this particular journey. Degrees are important. However, there are schools that have lower tuition than Kairos, even several you can attend for free. There are even other seminaries that offer affordable competency-based degree programs. So why choose Kairos? Why has God led you to any particular program instead of another one?

With a clear understanding of why, you can begin charting your course – that is you will have more clarity on where you are going. When trying to compare the Kairos journey to traditional educational processes, we said that it is a bit more like backpacking through Europe than a pre-arranged bus tour. On a pre-arranged bus tour, you are going to be more passive than active. The tour guide and bus driver have a specific schedule and predetermined stops along the way, and their goal is to provide the same experience for everyone who comes on the tour – every time. When you are backpacking through Europe, the journey still has particular destinations but the path you take is much more flexible. Among other things, you have the freedom to set the pace, choose which waypoints you might visit along the way to your destination, and consider who might come with you on that journey.

Often, where you are going is informed by where you have been. Take some time to think about what experiences led you to enroll in Kairos, what learning are you bringing in with you, what questions are you bringing in, and what story or stories have been shaping you. Asking questions like these can help you gain clarity on where to begin.

When a student first begins the journey through a program with Kairos, it is often the first time she or he has

had the opportunity to set their pace, direction, and approach to learning. In most cases elsewhere, when a student enters a program, she or he is given a list of courses that must be completed in a certain order (e.g., a degree plan), within a particular schedule (e.g., weekly class sessions during a semester), and using a specific modality (e.g., an online or onsite class).

Within Kairos, you have the opportunity to consider an array of options for how you make progress in the program. The pace, style, and organization of your learning journey can be set by you! We call this “student centered.” We have built an educational structure that puts students first. While each program has a defined list of outcomes (i.e., areas of integrated learning in which each student must demonstrate proficiency), how and where you begin, as well as the path you take to develop and demonstrate proficiency, can be defined by you.

While this can be exciting, it can also be a bit intimidating. There is a lot to learn and demonstrate in a degree program. As you start your journey through Kairos, it can be helpful to reflect a bit on where you might start.

Finally, we invite you to think about who and what you want to bring with you on this journey. You have the opportunity to interact with the global Kairos community while also staying focused on your local context. To aid in this process, you have the privilege of inviting mentors to walk with you. Take some time to think about who that might be. Likewise, you have a world of resources to bring with you. Given your answers to the questions about why you are here, where you are going, and where you have been, you will have a picture of what resources might be helpful along the way.

Over the last number of years, I think there is one thing that has been true for everyone who has become part of the community. Whether you are a partner organization, financial supporter, student, mentor, or member of the faculty, staff, or board, the common theme is that everyone should assume their experience in Kairos will be very different from anything they have experienced before. For some, this is invigorating. For others, this can sound daunting.

Whether you are a student who is invigorated by the possibility of joining a revolution or someone that is a bit intimidated by the idea that your educational journey will be more organic than precise, I think you will appreciate the opportunity to follow Jesus as part of the Kairos community.

Kairos is an amazing community of people who call Jesus Lord. We would love to have you join us as we follow Jesus on mission! [Back to top](#).