

•ONE•
MONTH
to LIVE

CHALLENGE

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STUDY GUIDE

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Session I

LIVING THE DASH

“So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.” *Psalm 90:12*

What are you living for? Who do you love? What are your passions? What are your greatest achievements and worst mistakes? Are you living based on fear or do you have a sense of urgency and purpose to do what is most important? These are many of the questions you should be asking as we begin this journey navigating what it looks like to live with limited time left. Are you living as though you had one month to live?

“Over the years of watching others live out their last days, I began to ask myself, “Why can’t all of us live more like we’re dying? Isn’t that how we were meant to live in the first place? To discover what we’re made for and to utilize our unique gifts in the limited time we’re given?” I’ve come to believe that the one month to live lifestyle is universal in principle but unique in expression. If we all lived as if we had one month left on this earth, we would each spend our days differently, in ways unique to us, and yet I believe we would all experience more fulfilling lives that could leave a legacy for eternity.” ***One Month to Live***

Current culture has twisted this concept and left out the most crucial element. YOLO – you only live once, live life with no regrets; these are similar statements but lacking the specific purpose of why. Anyone can go spend their life savings or do something crazy for the adventure, but to live a life truly with no regrets means we have a deep understanding of what is most important in life. When people are faced with death they tend to focus on a few key things. First, they want to get their relationship with God sorted out. Second, they want to get right with the people they love the most. In these moments you see hearts that once were not willing to forgive now radically transformed and ready to offer forgiveness. Families come together and reconcile differences, because

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it truly is now or never. True friends stand by your side in these moments wrestling with the emotions and heartbreak you both are experiencing.

The harsh reality is that this is what we should have been doing from the beginning. This is how we were created to live, but sin, hurt, pain, pride and selfishness have interfered in who God intended for us to be. The good news is that it's not too late! You still have breath and a chance now to live with purpose, with urgency and with passion investing in the things that will last for eternity. Welcome to the one month to live lifestyle. Ask these questions below as you begin to process what this looks like in your own life.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 | What are the most important things in your life?
- 2 | Are you living in a way that reflects those are truly the most important things?
- 3 | If you need to make changes, what steps or changes can you make today?
- 4 | What obstacles or challenges will stand in your way of making these changes and what type of strategy can you develop to overcome them?
- 5 | How do we best encourage and help each other live this one month to live lifestyle?

“O Lord, make me know my end and what is the measure of my days; let me know how fleeting I am! Behold, you have made my days a few handbreadths, and my lifetime is as nothing before you. Surely all mankind stands as a mere breath!” *Psalms 39:4-5*

Session 2

LIVE PASSIONATELY

“Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” *Joshua 1:6-9*

Sometimes it takes courage and perseverance to fight through the obstacles and barriers between us and the good purposes God has given us. Have you ever had a dream or idea that came and went? It was everything at first, but maybe the flame went out. Sometimes we look back on our lives and the dreams or visions we had of ourselves were good passions and purposes that God placed on our hearts, we just lost our way. I am so thankful we have a God of second chances, and third, fourth, fifth and keep going! He's so faithful and even when I've lost my way or forgotten what He did or who He created me to be, He is always there just one step of obedience from being perfectly in His will.

“God has put us here for a reason and planted dreams within us so we can do our part in seeing them realized. Whether we have thirty days or thirty years, we want to leave this life on earth without regrets. “If only’s” and “what if’s” will haunt us unless we know that we poured ourselves into bringing our unique dreams to life. Many people, however, have no idea what their dreams are and what they really want

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in life. Don't you feel this way at times? Maybe when your job is getting you down and you wonder if you've completely missed your calling. Maybe when a relationship falls apart or when circumstances make you question if you're in the right place. Maybe when you're just bored and going through another mundane, daily routine. During these moments we tend to forget what our true desires and dreams are because they get buried under an avalanche of pain. I believe God wants to thaw out that frozen dream that He placed in your heart. He wants to rescue you from an ordinary existence and bring your dream to life! The Psalmist said, "Taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8). I have found there is nothing tastier and more fulfilling than discovering and following the dream God has planted in your heart." *One Month to Live*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 | What dreams has God placed in your heart that need to be rekindled?
- 2 | What gifts, talents or resources has God given you that you aren't utilizing?
- 3 | Have you seen gifts, talents or resources in others that they seem to be missing? How can you encourage them to pursue their gifts for God's glory?
- 4 | Our society has a natural tendency to tear down, but God has called us to build each other up. Who can you speak life into this week to live passionately?
- 5 | What obstacles and barriers will you face trying to bring your God given gifts and talents to fruition? How will you overcome them or get help from others to overcome them?

"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. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do."

Ephesians 5:15-17

Session 3

LOVE COMPLETELY

“At that point Peter got up the nerve to ask, ‘Master, how many times do I forgive a brother or sister who hurts me? Seven?’

Jesus replied, ‘Seven! Hardly. Try seventy times seven. The kingdom of God is like a king who decided to square accounts with his servants. As he got under way, one servant was brought before him who had run up a debt of a hundred thousand dollars. He couldn’t pay up, so the king ordered the man, along with his wife, children, and goods, to be auctioned off at the slave market.

The poor wretch threw himself at the king’s feet and begged, ‘Give me a chance and I’ll pay it all back.’ Touched by his plea, the king let him off, erasing the debt. “The servant was no sooner out of the room when he came upon one of his fellow servants who owed him ten dollars. He seized him by the throat and demanded, ‘Pay up. Now!’ The poor wretch threw himself down and begged, ‘Give me a chance and I’ll pay it all back.’

But he wouldn’t do it. He had him arrested and put in jail until the debt was paid. When the other servants saw this going on, they were outraged and brought a detailed report to the king. The king summoned the man and said, ‘You evil servant! I forgave your entire debt when you begged me for mercy. Shouldn’t you be compelled to be merciful to your fellow servant who asked for mercy?’” *Matthew 18:21-33*

Forgiveness is always easier said than done. We can even have the right heart and truly forgive someone, yet still fight feelings of bitterness and resentment. Forgiving someone sometimes happens over and over again, yet that is exactly what Christ has done for us and what He tells us to do with others. Loving completely is understanding first what great lengths Jesus went to show His love for us, then second is to know that His love is for all, everyone, everywhere and all the time. Relationships can be



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messy, confusing and even hurtful, but God has given us love so that we can have everything we need in order to love in response. Now is the time to soften our hearts, receive Christ's love, so that we can forgive, love and show grace to those who have hurt us. If we have hurt others, now is the time to ask for forgiveness, to help reconcile and pray for restoration in broken relationships. We don't get to control other people's responses, but we have the opportunity to do what we know is right and there is healing in our hearts for those moments.

“We can't give what we haven't received. We know we've received forgiveness, but we don't really understand the depth of God's mercy, which makes it that much harder for us to forgive others. If I can understand a little bit of how much Christ has forgiven me, it's a whole lot easier to forgive others who've hurt me. When we don't confess or embrace the forgiveness so freely given to us, we begin to sink. Think of it, our past mistakes, sins and failures, as a huge anchor that weighs us down. It's effects are devastating – anxiety, depression, insomnia, hypertension, and ulcers. Guilt can poison every part of our life. The good news is that because of God's gift, you don't have to carry around the anchor of guilt that weighs you down.” *One Month to Live*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 | Do you need to be reminded of God's forgiveness, that He has already shown mercy?
- 2 | Who do you need to forgive right now? What have they done to you?
- 3 | Who do you need to ask for forgiveness from? How have you wronged them?
- 4 | In what ways have you experienced the burden of bitterness lifted when you've forgiven?
- 5 | What ways can we continue to encourage one another in showing love, grace and forgiveness?

“Once again you will have compassion on us. You will trample our sins under your feet and throw them into the depths of the ocean!”

Micah 7:19

Session 4

LEARN HUMBLY

“But the weather changed abruptly, and a wind of typhoon strength (called a “northeaster”) burst across the island and blew us out to sea. The sailors couldn’t turn the ship into the wind, so they gave up and let it run before the gale. We sailed along the sheltered side of a small island named Cauda, where with great difficulty we hoisted aboard the lifeboat being towed behind us. Then the sailors bound ropes around the hull of the ship to strengthen it. They were afraid of being driven across the sandbars of Syrtis off the African coast, so they lowered the sea anchor to slow the ship and were driven before the wind. The next day, as gale-force winds continued to batter the ship, the crew began throwing the cargo overboard. The following day they even took some of the ships gear and threw it overboard. The terrible storm raged for many days, blotting out the sun and the stars, until at last all hope was gone.” *Acts 27:14-20*

When the storms of life hit us, we must choose how we respond. Too often our relationships are blown apart because we’re completely unprepared for the storms and stresses that come into our lives. We get pounded by an unexpected tragedy or crisis that blindsides us. We can’t prevent the storm’s winds of change from blowing into our lives, our marriages, our families, our relationships, and our careers. But we can prepare for them and learn from prior storms. And storms will come – sooner or later. How will you respond to the storm?

We can learn from Paul’s example as he remained calm in the midst of the crisis. He was the only one on board who stayed confident, because he chose to look beyond the storm. He could see beyond the raging waters and gale-force winds to an upcoming positive change. Human nature inclines us to look only at the immediate problem and

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collateral damage rather than any potential positive outcomes. We become negative, depressed, and desperate to escape from our pain and discomfort rather than look beyond the long-term effects. Often we blame God and become bitter that He doesn't immediately alleviate our situation.

“God doesn't cause the painful changes in our lives, but He uses them and wants to bring good out of them. One way He does this is by growing our character. Psychologist John Townsend says immaturity is demanding that reality adapt to you. In the storms, immature people think, if reality goes my way, then I'm really happy, feeling great. If reality doesn't go my way, I'm miserable, and I will let everyone know it. Maturity, on the other hand, adapts to reality. And it's never easy. We're forced to acknowledge our weakness, set aside our way of doing things, and get in sync with a different, sometimes jarring, rhythm.”

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 | What is the biggest storm that you have experienced in your life?
- 2 | How did God grow your character in the midst or aftermath of that storm?
- 3 | Who is someone in your life that has been an example for you on how to respond to the storms of life? How did they respond to their storm or storms?
- 4 | How was Paul able to stay calm in the midst of the storm in Acts 27?
- 5 | In Acts 27:29 it says, "...they dropped four anchors from the stern and prayed for daylight." Paul anchored his life with God's presence. How can we make sure we anchor our lives with God's presence and prepare ourselves for the coming storm?

“For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.”

Jeremiah 29:11

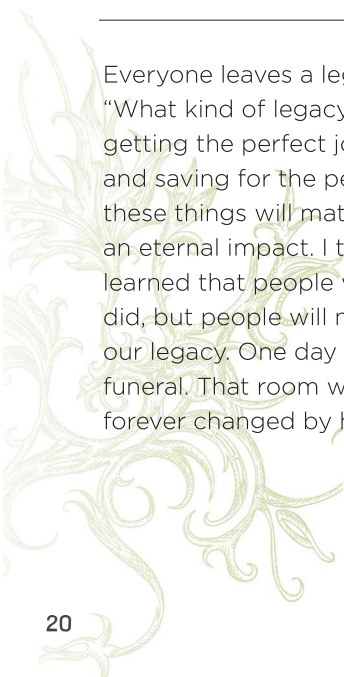
Session 5

LEAVE BOLDLY

“Praise the Lord! How joyful are those who fear the Lord and delight in obeying his commands. Their children will be successful everywhere; an entire generation of godly people will be blessed.

They themselves will be wealthy, and their good deeds will last forever. Light shines in the darkness for the godly. They are generous, compassionate, and righteous. Good comes to those who lend money generously and conduct their business fairly. Such people will not be overcome by evil. Those who are righteous will be long remembered. They do not fear bad news; they confidently trust the Lord to care for them. They are confident and fearless and can face their foes triumphantly.

They share freely and give generously to those in need. Their good deeds will be remembered forever. They will have influence and honor.” *Psalm 112:1-9*



Everyone leaves a legacy whether they realize it or not. The question is, “What kind of legacy are you leaving?” We are told to spend our lives getting the perfect job, buying the perfect house, driving the perfect car and saving for the perfect retirement. But if we die tomorrow, none of these things will matter. Our lives may be temporary, but they will make an eternal impact. I think Maya Angelou said it best when she said, “I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” People are our legacy. One day our friends and family will all gather together at our funeral. That room will only be filled with the people whose lives were forever changed by how we lived ours.

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“You have been given an extraordinary gift- your life. You have an exceptional calling-to be the very best YOU that God created you to be. Your goal is to unwrap this gift and use all that you’ve been given in the pursuit of what matters most- loving God and loving other people.”

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 | How do you want to be remembered?
- 2 | What did you do/invest in this week that will last longer than you?
- 3 | What did you do this week to make the people around you know that you love God and that you love them?
- 4 | How can you start to prioritize the things that actually matter? What is holding you back?
- 5 | Share and Pray. Share your struggles from this week. Pray for each other. Pray that God gives you the strength and boldness to make time for the things that matter most so that you will leave a lasting legacy.

“Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land that the Lord swore to give your forefathers, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth.” *Deuteronomy 11:18-21*



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