

Lesson 0300

Video/CD Title: Once In A Lifetime
Disc Start Time: 00:00

Author: David Meece
Disc End Time: 51:58

Instructions: Listen to the CD in its entirety. Do not use lyric sheets. Do not read the lessons.

Next, for each song, follow these instructions:

- Listen to the song as you follow the lyric sheet.
- Read the Discussion and consider your response to the Drill Down at the end.
- Listen to the song again as you follow the lyric sheet.
- Write your answer to the Drill Down at the end.

Lyrics 1: Living in the Shadows

Hey little boy are you living in the shadows Hey little boy are you living in the shadows Can you feel them clutch Oh, oh - it's an icy touch Oh, oh - and it costs so much Oh, oh - living in the shadows	Hey little girl are you cozy in the shadows Far from the sun is it rosy in the shadows Can't you hear the kiss Oh, oh - coming with a kiss Oh, oh - on those hungry lips Oh, oh - living in the shadows
Hey little boy are you driven by the shadows Hey little boy are you driven by the shadows Can you feel them press Oh, oh - in their eagerness Oh, oh - such a dark caress Oh, oh - living in the shadows	Hey little girl are you bound to your shadows Why don't you run, will you drown with your shadows Can't you feel their weight Oh, oh - it's as light as hate Oh, oh - and as firm as fate Oh, oh - living in the shadows
Oh, oh - living in the shadows Changing shape but never taking form Oh, oh - living in the shadows Promised life but never being born Oh, oh - living in the shadows Covered up but never ever warm Oh, oh - I've been there before I've been there before	Oh, oh - living in the shadows Changing shape but never taking form Oh, oh - living in the shadows Promised life but never being born Oh, oh - living in the shadows Covered up but never ever warm Oh, oh - I've been there before I've been there before

Discussion 1: Life is full of hurts and disappointments. And life doesn't wait until we are all grown up and ready to face the difficulties it brings. The woundings in our childhood often set up how we filter future events in our lives.

When a child is sexually abused, he or she will often turn to homosexuality or a life of hypersexuality that comes from the filter that tells them their value and acceptance as a person comes from their sexuality. A child growing in a home absent of unconditional love may grow up filtering life through accomplishments that give their life value.

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Even as Christians, we hold fast to these filters and live our lives through the wounds of our past. When given the opportunity to address these hurts and receive healing, we keep these things hidden in dark places, in the shadows. While we believe that we are keeping these things bound up so that we are safe from the pain they bring, in reality they keep us bound up in misery. We become emotionally and spiritually trapped at the age of our wounding.

The truth that God loves us unconditionally tells us that our value comes from Him and nothing we do can ever earn that love. This truth, when accepted, changes our entire value system: how we see ourselves, how we see others, and how we see the events in our lives. We are set free from this filter that distorts life and imprisons us from abundant life.

“You will know the truth and the truth will set you free.” “Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.” Jesus is the truth that sets us free. Only in Him can this filter be removed to allow us to see life as God created it leading us the abundant life Jesus promised. We can then grow into maturity.

Our first step is to, by faith, accept the love of God through Jesus Christ. Next, we must allow the light of His love to expose the wounds of our past and replace these filters (lies) with Truth.

Drill Down 1:

- Describe one event from your past that has created a filter of distortion in your life. Please describe the event with enough detail so the reader can feel your pain, experience your fear, and walk alongside you in the strong emotions this event left you with.

- How has it kept you from living an abundant life?

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Lyrics 2: Brokenness

In my brokenness In my hour of darkness I will lift my hands And worship You In my brokenness In my time of sadness I will lift my voice And praise to You Time stands still As I kneel down before You Life draws near Like waves upon the shore You touch me In my brokenness In these whispering shadows I will lift the pieces Of my heart to You	Time stands still As I kneel down before You Life is here Your waves of power And glory touch me In my brokenness In my hour of darkness I will lift my hands And worship You I will lift my hands And worship You
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Discussion 2: Then Job replied to the Lord, “I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted. You asked, ‘Who is this that obscures my counsel without knowledge? Surely I spoke of these things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know. You said, ‘Listen now, and I will speak; I will question you, and you shall answer me.’ My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.” *Job 42:6*

In hours of darkness it is easy to feel that God has forgotten us, and at times we even blame Him for our pain. Instead of lifting our hands and worshipping Him, we often accuse God as if He is an unfeeling puppeteer yanking the strings of our lives and leaving us limp and useless.

How confused we are about the presence of God in our lives! What misconceptions we pin on God about the afflictions that cause our pain. Many of us desperately need to learn that each trial is for a purpose and that the same God who sends the clouds also clears the skies.

It is not always easy to understand that the Lord is drawing us closer to Him through every fire that we endure. But the very fact that we go through trials in our lives is proof that there is something very precious in us to our Lord. He would not spend so much time testing us if He did not see the precious ore of faith mixed in with the rocky waste of our natural sinful selves.

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He allows trials of faith to enter our lives in order to purify our hearts and to deeply reveal Himself to us. Many of us must do a 180-degree turn in our thinking and realize that tests of faith draw us nearer to God and teach us about His love in ways that we would never understand otherwise. Our anger, frustration, and self-pity must finally give way to a humbled realization that God is loving us through those times by making us deeply aware of our helplessness and sin, burning away the chafe to reveal Himself to us. God is impressed by nothing but a broken and humbled heart. We must remember that He is always there, always in control and always loving us. Every tear we cry He cries with us. He yearns for His children to find His peace.

Our anger should instead be directed toward Satan, who seeks to destroy our relationship with God, our relationships with each other and with everything that is holy. He attacks subtly and by any means he can find to thwart our faith. His goal is to turn our hearts against God. But the confident and believing heart thanks and worships God for all that transpires in life, knowing that each trial is but a gracious invitation by a loving God to be in deeper union with Him. A heart for God knows that the promises of heaven await!

Drill Down 2:

- Share a difficult time in your life when you chose to run from or turn from God?

- Share a difficult time in your life when you chose to be drawn closer to God?

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Lyrics 3: Every Little Step

Lord I pray to You But sometimes I doubt You're there Lord I wait for you But You're silence seems unfair I want to find You Walk beside You Show me the way Every little step that I take Lead me on to see Your face Every little breath that I breathe Flow - flow Your river through me Every little thing that I do Let it only deepen my faith in You Every little step that I take Like a father's hand You pull me to my feet I know You understand You're strong - my body's weak Touch the child in me Open my eyes to see Show me the way	Every little step that I take Lead me on to see Your face Every little breath that I breathe Flow - flow Your river through me Every little thing that I do Let it only deepen my faith in You Every little step that I take Though Your hand's unseen And I can't hear You speak In the little things You reveal Yourself to me It's a long hard climb I need to know You're by my side All the time Every little step that I take Lead me on to see Your face Every little breath that I breathe Flow - flow Your river through me Every little thing that I do Let it only deepen my faith in You Every little step that I take
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Discussion 3: Hear my voice when I call, O Lord; be merciful to me and answer me. My heart says of You "Seek His face!" Your face, Lord, I will seek. Do not hide Your face from me, do not turn Your servant away in anger; You have been my helper. *Psalms 27:7-9*

Why do we doubt the goodness of our Lord? Why do we hope – even demand – that God make His way clear to us before we follow Him in faith? We often know in our hearts what must be done, yet we are short-sighted and fear taking that important step of faith. We cry out for answers to life's dilemmas but receive only silence in return. Our pleas for help seem to go unnoticed by this God who is supposed to love us so much.

"Where is He when we need Him most?" we wonder. We struggle to understand that God's love is more evident in times of suffering and heartache than in times of prosperity and safety. "Surely God has deserted us", we insist, as the darkness settles over us. We remember that even Jesus prayed to His Father while hanging on the cross, asking, "My God, My God, why has thou forsaken me?" We relate to those words. We relate to the feelings that the words seem to express.

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But human feelings can lead us astray. They are not true barometers of success or failure or right or wrong as seen through the eyes of God. God insists that we be faithful and obedient to His will – which is not necessarily equivalent to success in the world’s sight. It can be confusing when we feel that the direction God is leading us seems contrary to worldly standards of success. Too often we opt for a path we think is better, basing our decision on fickle human emotions. We pray to our Lord demanding that He come through for us in the manner that we have predetermined. We doubt God’s presence and we question His goodness when His answer differs from ours.

As we stare into circumstances that appear to be our undoing, we pray desperately for an easier, less painful path. But God has a plan for our lives. Just as he did not desert Jesus at the cross, neither does he desert us as we bear the personal crosses of our lives. His silence can be interpreted as gentle, persistent urgings to listen to Him more closely. He will respond with His holy direction if we will be still and listen to Him more closely. He will respond with His holy direction if we will be still and listen for Him in our hearts. His love will shine through the most desperate of times when we reach to Him in faith and believe that He is paving the way before us – every step of the way.

“Your will not mine Father,” were Jesus’ words as He faced the cross on that dark day. When we find ourselves in the dark places of life, we will experience His leading only when we completely lean on Him for His direction, releasing our will to become aligned with His will – not to our destruction but into the dwelling place of His eternal love.

Dear Lord, as I contend with areas in my life that appear to be my complete undoing, I confess that I feel so alone and afraid. It seems that Your answers only bring more pain. I want to let the shining light of Your love guide my path, but how I yearn to trust your plans for me. Even so, I place _____ at Your feet. I will live this one day at a time, believing that You are paving the way before me for better days.

Drill Down 3:

- Share about a time in your life when, as a Christian, you questioned God's love for you.

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Lyrics 4: Inside Out

<p>Gotta open that door Take a look inside Change what's in there From the inside out Inside out</p> <p>Find the window of truth Past the web of lies And open it wide From the inside out Inside out</p> <p>And let the winds Of conviction Blow through this Hurting soul of mine</p> <p>(Chorus) Search me Holy Spirit Help me look inside Tell me what You're seeing What I'm trying to hide Holy Spirit Send Your healing power Search me Holy Spirit Help me change from the inside out</p>	<p>Wanna know Your word Wanna hear Your voice Wanna heed your call From the inside out Inside out</p> <p>Gotta break these bars Gotta build a bridge I gotta climb that wall From the inside out Inside out</p> <p>So cast Your vision upon me And crush the chains that Have bound my heart</p> <p>(Chorus) Help me look inside What I'm trying to hide Send Your healing power Help me!</p> <p>(Chorus) Search me Holy Spirit Tell me what You're seeing</p>
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Discussion 4: "Search me, oh God, and know my heart. Test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me." *Psalm 139:23, 24*

If Christ's message can be distilled to its simplest form – "Love God and love one another" – why is loving God and loving others so difficult to do?

Perhaps we are afraid. Perhaps love has hurt in the past. Perhaps we have felt unsafe revealing our hearts to others. To protect ourselves from further pain, perhaps we have made a subconscious vow never to hurt like that again. It takes courage to ask God to search our hearts when we have spent so much of our lives protecting them. If God shines His heavenly light into the depths of our beings, can we face all that is hidden there? Will He really take us by the hand and lead us through the darkness into His eternal light? Will He love us in spite of what His light reveals? Will we be able to face the truth and receive our freedom?

Many of us avoid these gnawing questions by changing our lives in superficial ways. We erect walls, rely on others persons' standards, and pretend to be what we aren't. We deny the deep ache within our souls that is caused by the disappointing way we manage our lives. We seek relief wherever we can find it: drugs, alcohol, sex and a host of other diversions that provide short-term comfort.

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Often, when we turn to our churches for help, we are told that our pain is a result of not having enough faith or not spending enough time in Bible study and Christian service. With our ache magnified, we dive headfirst into more activity . . . hoping if we keep busy, the hurt will go away.

The world's message is clear: our identity is based on our performance, and our performance always falls short. The more subtle message is, "Whatever you do, don't admit that you hurt inside." We obey this message, and our lives grow more uncontrollable until the pace suddenly breaks down. At that point we face the decision of either turning from God in bitterness and anger, blaming our problems on Him, or turning to God in humbled recognition that we can't make life work on our own.

Oh, that our choice might always be to turn to God! There is nothing that He does not already know about us, yet He still loves us! We don't have to be afraid of asking Him to look inside. He waits for us to surrender the dark, hidden places in our hearts to Him. He hears and answers our prayers when we submit ourselves to His care.

True comfort comes from remembering that Jesus never expects us to fight our battles alone. He has blazed a path through every thicket and calls us to walk through the thorny places of our lives with Him. There is no darkness that He has not experienced before us. He knows the shadowy valley of disappointment and the rocky cliffs of temptation. He knows the narrow path of pain and the dizzying heights of victory. He even understands the dreary road of mundane routine. He has promised to meet us, wherever we are, with His eternal light.

Truthfully, God is never before His time and never behind. When the crises of our lives loom, He instructs us to rest in the assurance that He is fighting for us. At the appointed hour His secrets will be revealed. He will provide the grace and the light that will see us through. If we invited Him to search our hearts He will bring joy out of the depths of trial and wrestle His eternal treasures out of the hand of the enemy. He will meet us right where we are with His healing power.

If your heart is breaking under the weight of the wounds that you've carried too long, or if you've buried your pain and anger so deep that they rise to meet you each day in the guise of bitterness or depression, I implore you to stop reading and reach for God's hand. Give Him all your fear, anger, hurt and confusion. Let Him lead you through the shadowy valley. Risk allowing His light to shine into the concerns of your heart. Risk believing that God is more loving, understanding and forgiving than you ever dreamed. Though you may feel afraid to look deep inside, He invites you to learn how to trust and know beyond a doubt that in your weakness He is strong. For even while staring into the abyss of pain and confusion He holds you together, though it may seem as if life is falling apart. Taking a look inside is the only route to peace through a deeper relationship with God and to a more loving and transparent relationship with those around you. True change can only happen from the inside out.

Drill Down 4:

- What relational wounds have you kept from being examined?

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Lyrics 5: My Father's Chair

Sometimes at night I'd lie awake Longing inside for my father's embrace Sometimes at night I'd wander downstairs And pray he'd returned, but no one was there. Oh, how I'd cry, a child all alone Waiting for him to come home.	(Chorus) My father's chair sits in a loving room My father's chair, no matter what I do My father's chair, through all the years And all the tears I need not fear Love's always there in my father's chair.
(Chorus) My father's chair, sat in an empty room My father's chair, covered with sheets of gloom My father's chair through all the years And all the tears I cried in vain No one was there in my father's chair.	Sometimes at night I dream of a throne Of my loving God, calling me home And as I appear, He rises and smiles And reaches with love to welcome His child Never to cry, never to fear In His arms, safe and secure.
Sometimes at night I sit all alone Drifting asleep in a chair of my own When sweet sleepy eyes peer down from the hall Frightened by dreams they cannot recall I hold them close, calming their fears Praying they always will say,	(Chorus) My Father's chair sits in a royal room My Father's chair holds glory beyond the tomb My Father's chair, my God is there And I am His eternal heir Someday I'll share my Father's chair.

Discussion 5: "He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne." *Revelation 3:21 (NASB)*

Imagine God rising from His throne and smiling as He welcomes us into our eternal dwelling place. Imagine the peace that comes from knowing we will never cry again, never fear again, never hurt again because we are in His presence, at rest in His arms.

For many of us, the image of God as a loving father seems foreign because of the profound rejection we have experienced at the hand of our earthly fathers. We have been pushed away and told "there are more important things to do" or "there isn't time for you." Although the harsh words may have been spoken years ago, the hurt has remained in our souls. How we've longed to be loved unconditionally!

We are created by God as relational beings, and we yearn for warm fellowship with one another and with Him. In heaven we will finally enjoy that perfect fellowship as we see and experience the brilliant majesty of our Lord. His presence will comfort us for eternity. Our needs will not be an issue, and we will be free to focus on glorifying and serving Him. There will be no more children longing for a parent's embrace, no more aching hearts yearning to be loved, and no more hurting souls striving for acceptance. We will no longer wrestle with our sin nature as we try to live independent of God.

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Oh, what an inheritance! What a blessed promise! We can rejoice with the apostle Paul who said, "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" (I Cor. 2:9). And it is the promise of these future blessings that purifies our lives, energizes our obedience and overpowers our demands for instant gratification. We accept the fact that many of the difficulties we experience may not be resolved in this life because our Father's purposes transcend our temporal situations if we are willing to wait.

The reward of the one who is patient and faithful will be to reign with the Father and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Matthew 25:34 (NASB)

Is your heart filled with pain and bitterness? Does the thought of a heavenly father and eternal kingdom seem distant? If so, seek the kingdom with more determination than ever before. Pursue Him by reading His word and building relationships with people who love Him. Through faith, you too can share the promise, joy, and hope for our future.

Ponder your image of God.

Drill Down 5:

- How do the failures of your earthly father taint your image of God?

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Lyrics 6: Over You

<p>Great wars have been fought Great crusades of the 'Saved' Have been launched (Over You)</p> <p>Their heretic searches and inquisitorial taunts (Over You) At least that's what was said by the ones Who were dreaming of lifting their heads</p> <p>Over You, over You There is nothing, there's no one There's no other Lord over You, over You You're the great King, the one God, The Lord of us all There is none, there is none Over You, over You, over You, over You</p> <p>The skeptics laugh "Faith is past, God is dead We are at last over You Our infatuation's lost all fascination We're now over You"</p> <p>But then, not all agree You know, as for myself Lord, I never could be</p> <p>Over You, over You There is nothing, there's no one There's no other Lord over You, over You You're the great King, the one God,</p>	<p>The Lord of us all There is none, there is none Over You, over You, over You, over You</p> <p>Under your mercy, dear God, I will stay Under your sheltering hand, I will pray Under your covering word, I have learned how to say</p> <p>Over You, over You There is nothing, there's no one There's no other Lord over You, over You You're the great King, the one God, The Lord of us all There is none, there is none Over You, over You There's nothing, there's no one There's no other Lord over You, over You You're the great King, the one God, The Lord of us all There is none, there is none</p> <p>Over You, over You Over You, over You Over You, over You Over You, over You</p> <p>There is none over You There is none over You Over You, over You Over You, over You</p>
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Discussion 6: There is none over You!

As Christians we believe that God is Lord of all, but on a daily basis we don't always live our lives consistent with that belief. Why do we find it so hard to dwell in the shelter of Christ even though we know He is our only true refuge? Why are we tempted to put worldly goals above our pursuit of Godliness?

In a very real sense, each of us comes from a family that disappoints us at some level or another. This is because of the subtle nature of sin and the way it permeates our world. We were made by God for perfect unions but our lives are filled with flawed relationships. When trust has been violated by someone close to us, either as a child or as an adult, we build invisible walls around our hearts in a vain attempt to not hurt again. Just as we wall-out pain, so do we wall-out love, creating an internal environment that allows the very thing we despise to prosper and negatively impact our lives at every level.

We struggle with insecurity, inadequacy and the longing for someone to love us unconditionally. Sometimes when we feel that we've tried our best or done all that we can do, we question God in a Job-like manner, thinking we deserve an audience with the Almighty. Desperately we demand that God explain Himself and show us His blueprint for our

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lives. In our pain we yearn to have Jesus come down from the heavens and sit with us face to face so that we might ask the questions that haunt us.

As we struggle with failure we grasp for areas where we feel successful, competent and in control. As we seize command of our lives the deceiving balm of earthly security temporarily soothes our pain and anxiety. We drift further and further from God as we seek to ease the ache in our souls via self-centered efforts. The more control that we claim, the less is our faith in God. Without realizing it, we put "feeling better" above our pursuit of God. Consequently, these areas of control become the idols that we place above our relationship with the Lord.

In the midst of tough times we often doubt God, insisting that He prove Himself before we trust Him. Aren't we supposed to believe God is with us no matter what the trial? It is comforting to be reminded that everything that happens to us must first pass by God. He knows our needs at all times. Though we may feel deserted and alone at times, He *never* deserts us. All that concerns us concerns God. No matter how dark the night or how desperate the circumstance we are never alone. Our weakness needs His strength and our safety lies in letting Him fight our battles for us. All He asks is that we trust Him in childlike faith. But how do we do that?

Faith is like walking in the dark with God - we want to see; He wants us to trust. We pray for more faith but often what we ask is to understand where God is leading. We forget that faith is more than mustering our strength and insisting that a certain request be granted. Faith is standing firmly on the promise that God will not forsake us. He wants to clasp our hand, if we will let Him and allow Him to lead in light and in darkness, in good times and in turmoil. He wants us to trust Him to chart the best path for us to follow. **We think that seeing is believing; He wants us to know that by believing we will see.** Many of us need to change our view of God. **Instead of using God to solve our problems, we should use our problems as vehicles by which to know God.** Then, as we move with God through the issues in our lives, resting in His almighty shadow, we begin to understand more fully that under His sheltering hand is the only safe place to stay.

There is none over You, God. You're the Great King, the One God, the Lord of us all. Your grace is sufficient.

"Lord, I am reminded that everything that happens to me must first pass by You. I don't understand all that transpires and at times I wonder why You allow things, such as _____ to happen. My tendency is to demand answers from You instead of resting on the promise that You work all things for good for those who trust You. It is hard to believe that You hear my prayers when I feel so misunderstood by those who profess to love me in this fallen world. But, even so, Lord I believe in Your power and I faithfully turn _____ over to You. I remind myself that all that concerns me concerns You. I must learn to let You fight my battles for me. You're the Great King, the Lord of us all. There is none over You!"

Drill Down 6:

- Describe a recent event by which you used your problem as a vehicle by which to know God better.

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Lyrics 7: Going Home

It should feel so good It should be so right Going home again To find the years that shaped my life But shadows line the streets They whisper endlessly And all I see are ghosts Of my most painful memories	And somewhere in the night You see a distant light Lifting up my soul To meet the God who gave us life Mama don't you cry Children don't you weep For all the ghosts have vanquished And my journey is complete
Going home, going home Lord someday I'm going home To a place where I know I belong Where the ghosts and the fears And the shadows disappear Oh His angels bear us there Going home	Oh going home, going home Lord someday I'm going home To a place where I know I belong Where the ghosts and the fears And the shadows disappear Oh his angels bear us there Going home

Discussion 7: “In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.” *John 14:2-3*

In a world where only scientific documentation determines what is “truth,” we often experience doubts similar to those of the disciple Thomas. We question God’s incredible love for us. Did He really allow His only son to suffer an agonizing death to cleanse us of our sins? We search for evidence of the resurrection and secretly wonder if heaven is more a mythical dream world than our eternal home. The story of our Lord’s life – so full of miracles – seems unbelievable by today’s standards. Is it possible that we have bought into a well-planned hoax? A fairy tale?

But one element of proof does exist, although the world may not give it credence: the unmistakable calling of God to our hearts. Once the Lord has spoken to us, His word becomes undeniably true in a way that no amount of “evidence” to the contrary can shake. When the Lord has called us to be His own, there is no denying the reality of our home in heaven. And because of this, death loses its power; it becomes a welcomed doorway home.

Though dying is not a subject most of us enjoy contemplating, it cannot be denied. We envision death as an unwelcome passage from the warmth of family and friends to the lonely cold of the grave. What possible glory could there be in death? But as our knowledge of the Lord’s grace and goodness grows, we catch glimpses of heaven and begin to see that true warmth awaits us after our passage.

This earthly life, with its joy and its pain is but a prelude to that glorious day when we will finally meet, face to face, the God who gives us life. “He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or crying or mourning or pain, for the old order of things has passed away. He who was seated on the throne said, ‘I am making everything new’” (Rev. 21:4-5)

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Lyrics 8: Early In The Morning

<p>Once a good, young King came by, Early in the morning Hope soared, nearly to the sky, Early in the morning Yet that first hope nearly died With so little warning The good, young King was crucified Early in the morning</p> <p>In the stone cold tomb He lay, Early in the morning Laid with Him the hope of day, Early in the morning Saints and Angels fearful, pray, Yearning for a dawning Breaking on the silent grave, Early in the morning</p> <p>Hallelujah, oh, the bright dawn breaks Hallelujah, Hallelujah Hallelujah, oh, the sweet King wakes Hallelujah, Hallelujah</p> <p>Long the anxious claws had gripped, Early in the morning Now vanquished claws have slipped, Early in the morning Now the bragging dragon trips, Head so high, now fawning Mouth denied, forever drips, Early in the morning</p>	<p>Hallelujah, empty claws proclaim Hallelujah, Hallelujah Hallelujah, now the good King reigns Hallelujah, Hallelujah</p> <p>Steady in the waning night, Early in the morning Risen Morning Star, our Light, Early in the morning Dragons breed again to fight, Fearful is their taunting Yet, we trust, Lord, Thy great might, Early in the morning</p> <p>Hallelujah, Saints and Angels sing Hallelujah, Hallelujah Hallelujah, praise the risen King Hallelujah, Hallelujah</p> <p>Hallelujah, Saints and Angels sing Hallelujah, Hallelujah Hallelujah, praise the risen King Hallelujah, Hallelujah</p> <p>Hallelujah, Saints and Angels sing Hallelujah, Hallelujah Hallelujah, praise the risen King Hallelujah, Hallelujah</p>
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Discussion 8: “. . . I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies.”

John 11:25 (NASB)

Alleluia! Praise the risen King! Lord, we trust in Your great might as evidenced through Your death and resurrection. The resurrection of Christ is the cornerstone of our faith. Nothing else matters. If Jesus did not rise from the dead then the gospel is not true. If Jesus had not risen from the grave, we would be without hope. Death would still have its sting each time we lose a loved one to its cold grip. We would live in constant fear of its dark veil shrouding our days.

The resurrection of Jesus is God's guarantee to us that He has accepted His Son's death as sufficient payment for our sin. Without Christ's resurrection there is no gospel, no forgiveness of sin, and no victory over the grave. Because of His resurrection we can face death without fear. Like Jesus, we too shall be raised from the grave.

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But did the resurrection mean that His work was finished?

Christ's resurrection frees us to approach God's throne with confidence.

We have a representative in heaven. Jesus is our sympathetic high priest; our mediator with God. He was tempted in all things as we are, yet remained without sin. Because He was born as a man and lived and died as a man, He knows and understands all that we experience. He knows what it's like to hurt, to grieve, to love, to be overcome with fatigue. He is so intimately involved with each of us that He even knows the number of hairs on our heads! Believers can rejoice because God is with us at all times. Christ's name, Immanuel, means "God with us", literally translated as "The Father of Eternity." He is eternally sovereign, yet so compassionate that He weeps with us. He feels what we feel.

No, Christ's work did not end at the cross. He is very much with us through His Word and His Holy Spirit. He continues to pave the way for us each day. Even as you read this He sits next to His Father in heaven ready to intercede for you. And though Satan blinds the minds of non-believers so they cannot see the reality of the gospel, Christ calls us to respond in faith. He can dispel the darkness and cause His light to shine in your heart – if you will allow Him.

Alleluia! Praise the risen King! Though dragons breed again to fight, Lord, we trust in Your great might!

"Dear Jesus, thank You for dying for me. It is so incomprehensible to me that You love me that much. Even as I pray right now, I know that You sit at the right hand of God ready to intercede for me. I am struggling with _____ this very moment. I give this burden to You and pray that through Your wisdom and strength, You will guide me through this difficult time. You are the resurrection and the life and I believe in You."

Just as God is with us through every struggle, He has called us to live interdependently with others in the faith. We rely on confession (with the laying on of hands) for our healing and the testimony of others for our overcoming. During one of this week's classes, share with your brothers the struggle you prayed about above.

Drill Down 8:

- Share the struggle you prayed about above.

Lesson 0300

Lyrics 9: Once in a Lifetime

I still feel the pain the darkness of yesterday The clouds that held no rain Illusions remain and memories mock the truth But God can break these chains This day comes but once I live or I lose remember	No matter where we've been No matter what we've done Today can be our once in a lifetime For yesterday is gone Tomorrow may not come This moment is our once in a lifetime
No matter where we've been No matter what we've done Today can be our once in a lifetime For yesterday is gone Tomorrow may not come This moment is our once in a lifetime	Our day is today our moment is now To follow out dreams to reach for eternity
In spite of the tears the chill of a winter's light The sorrow of the night My cold lonely past is melting away from me As by God's grace I see this moment is mine My moment of truth forever	No matter where we've been No matter what we've done Today can be our once in a lifetime For yesterday is gone Tomorrow may not come This moment is our once in a lifetime

Discussion 9: “Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.” *Philippians 3:13-14*

Our lives are but a grand procession of moments. Some moments that take our hearts soaring above the clouds and point us toward heaven; others descend upon us with crushing blows that beat us to our knees and drain our hearts of all that we know as good. There are moments that we etch in our hearts as once-in-a-lifetime moments, coupled with those difficult ones that fill our hearts with numbness and grief.

And somewhere in between are the bittersweet moments we can't categorize. Often when we look back at a crushing sorrow we see the holy paradox of tender loving moments interspersed with painful ones. We see how a difficult experience drew us closer to those we love. We embrace a deeper compassion and understanding for those around us as we watch them stumble under the load of their own crushing moments. Like never before, we see the way God walks with us when we are least able and how the body of Christ surrounds us when our prayer is no more than a desperate plea for help or a whimpering cry in the darkness. We see how God's silent strength cradles our souls as He scoops us up in His arms and mends our broken hearts with His grace. Little by little, moment by moment, we see the good shine brightest when contrasted with darkness. Somewhere between the richest blessing and the most crushing setback we recognize the presence of the Eternal in our every moment.

We pray that our todays won't slip by unnoticed because we are so engrossed with tomorrow or preoccupied with yesterday. Today may be our lifetime! Today may be all that we have. We must not waste its moments in anxiety over tomorrow or allow it to be swallowed by fears dictated by our past. Tomorrow is God's secret; it must pass by Him before it gets to us. Today is ours to live!

Lesson 0300

The time for doing and for living is now. We must let go of the worries and burdens built upon our yesterdays and tomorrows, for they are what undermine our faith and cause us to lose today. It isn't the experience of today that threatens our sanity, but remorse over yesterday and the dread of tomorrow. We must learn to live one day at a time knowing that the same God who saw us through yesterday, guides us through today, and prepares us for tomorrow. As faith grows, we gradually realize that our strength lies not in what we have, but rather in what we are willing to surrender to God.

We don't have to carry the weight of our past into today, for it belongs faithfully surrendered at the feet of God. The time to live is now. Yesterday is gone and tomorrow may not come, but we have today. Today may be our once in a lifetime!

"Dear Lord, how I tend to waste the moments of today caught between the pain of yesterday and the dread of tomorrow. Help me to let go of the past and begin to recognize Your presence in my every moment. Help me to live for You as if TODAY is my once in a lifetime."

In your own words, write down your declaration that TODAY is your
ONCE IN A LIFETIME! Make this declaration at the beginning of each new day.
As you see the fruit of your declaration, share it with your brothers.

Drill Down 9:

- In your own words, write down your declaration that TODAY is your ONCE IN A LIFETIME! Make this declaration at the beginning of each new day. As you see the fruit of your declaration, share it with your brothers.
