

One Month to Live: Thirty Days to a No-Regrets Life

By Kerry Shook, Chris Shook

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"If you want new urgency, fresh purpose, and a sharper focus for your life, then this book is for you. Read it and your future may be changed forever!"
—Lee Strobel, best-selling author of *The Case for Christ* and *The Case for the Real Jesus*

Are you suffering from "someday" syndrome—always waiting for someday when your schedule calms down, your finances improve, or your kids grow up so you can begin to live the life you've always dreamed of?

What if you learned you had just one month to live? Without a doubt, you'd stop living on autopilot and determine to make the most of every moment.

You don't have any time to waste.

Why wait to answer the longings of your heart? In One Month to Live, Kerry and Chris Shook show you how to stop waiting for "someday" and start now to make each day really matter. With contagious enthusiasm and practical insights, you'll learn how to apply the four universal principles of a no-regrets life:

LIVE PASSIONATELY, living each day as if it were your last.
LOVE COMPLETELY, showing others love that transcends and transforms.
LEARN HUMBLY, growing through your problems and pain.
LEAVE BOLDLY, creating a legacy that will impact generations.

Each of the thirty chapters—one per day in a life-changing month—offers fresh strategies and tools to experience revitalizing change in core areas of your life. Uplifting true-life stories and thought-provoking questions will inspire you to squeeze all you can out of each day you've been given.

Stop wasting precious time. Start living today as God created you to live—passionate, fully alive, without regrets.

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Editorial Review

Review
Praise for *One Month to Live*

"So many of us waste our lives with 'when and then' thinking, believing that 'when' this or that happens, 'then' we will really start living and do something for God that really matters. That approach is guaranteed to leave you with regrets. At the end of your life, the only thing that will matter is whether you accomplished God's purpose for your life. Jesus was just 12 when he said, 'I must be about My Father's business.' Barely 20 years later, he could say to the Father, 'I have completed the work you gave me to do.' If we all had that kind of focus and concentration in our lives, there's no telling what God could accomplish in the world! Kerry and Chris Shook want you to grasp that amazing insight: Embracing your mortality sets you free to live a meaningful and significant life without regret. *One Month to Live* is a great way to discover the purposeful, joyful, abundant life God created you to enjoy!"
–**Rick Warren*, founding pastor, Saddleback Church, and author of international bestseller, The Purpose Driven Life***

"Kerry and Chris Shook are world-class leaders whose lives and ministry have impacted untold numbers of people, including me. Regardless of where you are on your spiritual journey, *One Month to Live* will challenge you to passionately live the life you were made for and leave an eternal legacy."
–Bill Hybels, Founding Pastor, Willowcreek Church and bestselling author of Too Busy Not to Pray

"Kerry Shook is a friend, devoted father, supportive husband, and inspiring pastor. As one of today's most gifted communicators, Kerry's unique and creative style enables him to take the most complex issues and make them practical and relevant to daily living. He has a genuine love for people that is contagious. His ministry is changing the lives of individuals and families here in Houston and transforming communities all across the nation."
–Joel Osteen, pastor of Lakewood Church and bestselling author of Your Best Life Now

"If you want new urgency, fresh purpose, and a sharper focus for your life, then this book is for you. Read it and your future may be changed forever!"
–Lee Strobel, author of The Case for the Real Jesus

From the Hardcover edition.

About the Author
Kerry and Chris Shook founded Fellowship of The Woodlands near Houston, Texas, with eight people in 1993. Since then, the church has grown to more than fifteen thousand people. Kerry's sermons are televised nationally and internationally each week, reaching
millions of people with innovative and inspiring messages.

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Day 1: Introduction

Living the Dash

"Death is more universal than life; everyone dies but not everyone lives."
–ALAN SACHS

"I am convinced that it is not the fear of death, of our lives ending, that haunts our sleep so much as the fear…that as far as the world is concerned, we might as well never have lived."
–HAROLD KUSHNER

Your time on earth is limited. No matter how much this idea makes you squirm, it's a fact. No matter who you are, how young or old, what measure of success you've attained, or where you live, mortality remains the great equalizer. With each tick of the clock, a moment of your life is behind you. Even as you read this paragraph, seconds passed that you can never regain. Your days are numbered, and each one that passes is gone forever.

If you're like me, you may be tempted to view this reality as harsh and unwelcome, to let it overwhelm and even paralyze you. But that's not my purpose in writing this book–just the opposite. Rather than inhibiting us to play it safe, I'm convinced that *embracing our time on earth as a limited resource has incredible power to liberate us.* For most of us, if we knew we only had one month to live, we would live differently. We would be more authentic about who we are and more deliberate about how we spent our time. But such a contrast begs the question: *what keeps us from living this way now?*

My motivation to find the answer–and better yet, to live it and help you live it–is born in part from my experience in ministry. In this role I've been privileged to spend time with many people as they face the imminent end of their lives on earth. While all of them struggle through the stages of grief–shock, denial, bargaining, guilt, anger, depression, acceptance–most of them make radical changes as a result of their awareness of their terminal conditions. They take license to say what they really feel and do what they really want. They ask for forgiveness and forgive others. They no longer think only of themselves but reach out to those they love and let them know how much they mean. They take risks they would never have taken before and allow themselves to lay worry aside and gratefully accept each new day. They seem to gain a new clarity on their priorities, like their relationship with God and leaving legacies that will endure.

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 amount of time we're given?
So last year at a staff retreat I tried a little experiment and asked our team members this question: "If you knew you had one month to live, how would you live differently?" I gave everyone a journal and challenged them to live the next thirty days as if they were their last and to write down what happened.

The results were nothing less than life changing! At the end of the thirty days, we all had a greater clarity of purpose and a renewed passion for the things that really matter. Many people did big, once-in-a-lifetime things, like going on a dream vacation to Hawaii with their spouse, finally getting serious about a healthy lifestyle and losing twenty-five pounds, or reconciling a relationship with a parent that had been neglected for years.

For me, the little, daily things took on a whole new meaning and forever changed my life. Taking my youngest two children to school every day became a real joy. I became keenly aware of what a sacred moment it is every morning to play twenty questions with Steven and to make up silly songs with my teenage daughter, Megan. I made sure that I met my two oldest sons, Ryan and Josh, at their favorite

restaurant once a week after school just to connect. Many of our staff members did whatever it took to be at all their children's ball games, recitals, and school events. At the same time, I noticed that the team was more productive than ever, wanting the things they did at work to make a lasting impact.

I've since come to believe that the one-month-to-live lifestyle is universal in principle but unique in its 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 Little Dash

Perhaps no place echoes with eternity quite like a cemetery. Not surprisingly, I'm fascinated by old gravestones and the lives they represent. The dates on some of the old monuments and grave markers in the Houston area where I live go back to the eighteen hundreds. My imagination launches me into the various stories that each marker tells. I find myself pondering what life was like in 1823 or 1914.

I know people back then had the same problems and pain as everyone does in life, but I wonder if they felt as stressed and pressured as I do. Our technology and modern conveniences have revolutionized our twenty-first-century lives but at what price?

Looking at old tombstones, I can't help but recognize that entire lives are now reduced before me into two dates and one little dash. Some monuments include facts or sayings, Bible verses or poignant memorials, but each person's life really comes down to what transpired between those two dates. It comes down to what's in the dash. I look at the dash of a particular person's marker and wonder,
What did he live for? Whom did she love? What were his passions? What were her biggest mistakes and greatest regrets?

When you think about it, we don't have control over many things in life. We didn't get to decide where we were born, who our parents are, or which time period and culture we face. We don't get to decide the dates on our gravestone. We don't know when our time on this earth will be up. It could be next week or next year or decades away. Only God knows. Our lives are in His hands. But there is one thing we have a vast amount of control over. We get to decide how we're going to use our dash.

You get to choose how to spend that little dash of time between the two dates of your earthly existence. What are you spending yours on? Are you living the dash, knowing fully who you are and why you're here? Or dashing to live, hurriedly spending precious time chasing things that really don't matter to you? The psalmist prayed, "Teach us to number our days and recognize how few they are; help us to spend them as we should" (Psalm 90:12, TLB). God wants us to realize that our time on earth is limited so we will spend it wisely. But He gives us the choice about how we spend this most valuable currency.

No Change Required

While many of the people I've known who are facing death make radical changes in order to die well, occasionally I meet some who change very little. It's not that they are unwilling to change. It's that they have lived so deliberately and so authentically that the news of the end of this life doesn't turn them upside down. Of course they grieve and struggle with the news. They ache for their families and the people they love. But they take comfort in knowing they have been living focused on what matters most to them: their relationships with the ones they love, their relationship with the God of the universe, and the fulfillment of their unique purpose on this earth.

Wouldn't it be wonderful to spend your life so that if you discovered you only had a month to live, you

wouldn't need to change a thing? What's holding you back? What are you waiting on? Repeatedly in Scripture, God reminds us that our lives are short compared to eternity.

"Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes" (James 4:14).

Of course I'm not encouraging you simply to live for today. Most of us can't afford to quit our jobs overnight, say what we're really feeling all the time, or act on every spontaneous idea. This kind of a lifestyle seems selfish and wildly indulgent and may indicate that such a person doesn't believe there's anything beyond this life. But life is more than what we know of it on earth. Even as we engage ourselves in the present, we must think through the eternal impact of how we live.

The Bible tells us that God has placed eternity in our hearts (Ecclesiastes 3:11). He created us in His own image as spiritual beings but in fleshly bodies. If we're honest, most of us sense there has to be more to our existence than what this world can offer.

This is the point where many people turn to faith. But just as some people live like there's no tomorrow, others use their faith to live like there's no today. They're always thinking about heaven "some day" instead of fully experiencing life today. The only way we can live for eternity is to embrace each day as a gift from God. We must live in the tipping point between the everyday and the eternal. He created us and has given us another day to live–to know and experience His love, to love and serve those around us, to live passionately the life He's made us for. The temporal nature of our lives should keep our focus on what matters most.

Thirty-Day Challenge

Be brutally honest with yourself. *Your time on earth is limited. Shouldn't you start making the most of it?* If you knew you had one month to live, you would look at everything from a different perspective. Many of the things you do now that seem so important would immediately become meaningless. You would have total clarity about what matters most, and you wouldn't hesitate to be spontaneous and risk your heart. You wouldn't wait until tomorrow to do what you need to do today.

The way you lived that month would be the way you wished you had lived your whole life.

If you knew you had one month to live, your life would be radically transformed. But why do we wait until we're diagnosed with cancer or we lose a loved one to accept this knowledge and allow it to free us? Don't we want all that life has to offer? Don't we want to fulfill the purpose for which we were created? Wouldn't life be a lot more satisfying if we lived this way?

I'm challenging you to start living your life as though you have one month to live, and I've designed this book to help you. There are four universal principles in the one-month-to-live lifestyle: to live passionately, to love completely, to learn humbly, and to leave boldly. I've divided this book into four sections or "weeks" accordingly, and I encourage you to live these next thirty days as if they were your last. For each day there's a chapter designed to help you focus on that week's principle.

Each chapter also contains two features to inspire your thirty-day life experiment. Throughout each chapter, you'll find "Make It Count Moments" with questions designed to help you examine your life and focus on what's most important. The other feature, called "Make It Last for Life," comes at the end of each chapter and offers ways to act on that day's focus. These action points don't require homework so much as they inspire *lifework,* ways for you to implement and personalize the material to your life. You may want to allow time to think through these items, to journal about them, and to pray about them. If you're reading this book

with others in a group, then this will be a great place to focus your discussion.

Regardless of how you use this book, my hope and prayer is that you'll think seriously about what you want most out of life and what keeps you from pursuing it. I hope you'll embrace the fact that someday your life will come to an end so you will begin to live each day more fully.

You don't have to wait until there's a crisis to consider how you can experience life to the fullest. If you're willing to take this thirty-day challenge, be prepared for life to radically improve. You can live with no regrets and embrace a life so abundant you'll wonder why you ever settled for less.

There's no time like the present–right now!–to get started. Reading this book takes time, your most precious commodity, and I promise not to waste one second you spend on these pages. As you discover the life you were made for, today can truly be the first day of a life with no regrets. Claim today as the start of a month that's guaranteed to change your life!

From the Hardcover edition.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Ernestine Miller:

Inside other case, little people like to read book One Month to Live: Thirty Days to a No-Regrets Life. You can choose the best book if you want reading a book. So long as we know about how is important some sort of book One Month to Live: Thirty Days to a No-Regrets Life. You can add knowledge and of course you can around the world with a book. Absolutely right, because from book you can realize everything! From your country until foreign or abroad you will be known. About simple issue until wonderful thing you could know that. In this era, we can open a book or perhaps searching by internet unit. It is called e-book. You can use it when you feel bored stiff to go to the library. Let's examine.

Albert Matthews:

This book untitled One Month to Live: Thirty Days to a No-Regrets Life to be one of several books that will best seller in this year, here is because when you read this book you can get a lot of benefit onto it. You will easily to buy that book in the book retailer or you can order it by using online. The publisher on this book sells the e-book too. It makes you easier to read this book, as you can read this book in your Touch screen phone. So there is no reason to you personally to past this e-book from your list.

Donna Gamble:

People live in this new day of lifestyle always make an effort to and must have the spare time or they will get lot of stress from both way of life and work. So , whenever we ask do people have time, we will say absolutely sure. People is human not a robot. Then we ask again, what kind of activity do you possess when the spare time coming to you actually of course your answer will certainly unlimited right. Then ever try this one, reading publications. It can be your alternative in spending your spare time, the particular book you

have read is One Month to Live: Thirty Days to a No-Regrets Life.

Richard Manning:

Reading can called head hangout, why? Because if you are reading a book especially book entitled One Month to Live: Thirty Days to a No-Regrets Life your head will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in most aspect that maybe unknown for but surely will become your mind friends. Imaging each word written in a guide then become one type conclusion and explanation in which maybe you never get previous to. The One Month to Live: Thirty Days to a No-Regrets Life giving you yet another experience more than blown away your thoughts but also giving you useful details for your better life in this era. So now let us explain to you the relaxing pattern at this point is your body and mind is going to be pleased when you are finished reading through it, like winning a casino game. Do you want to try this extraordinary investing spare time activity?

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