

**February 27<sup>th</sup>- March 5<sup>th</sup>**

**Dear God: Sermon Behind the Song**

In this lesson you will learn three ways to turn to God when life feels overwhelming.

**Intro:** The song “Dear God” is about drawing closer to God when you’re trying to find hope and life feels overwhelming. Sometimes in life you can get into a slump and feel emotionally drained and exhausted. You may face unexpected criticism from unexpected places and people. Compound this with the responsibilities of parenting small children, while trying to be the best spouse you can be simultaneously fulfilling your duties of a full-time job and life can quickly overwhelm you. It is in these times of problems and pressures that we can feel extremely vulnerable and inadequate to handle all that life throws our way. If we turn to God in these moments, we will find the strength and fortitude to overcome.

**I. Open the Door to His Presence**

- A. God has a plan for your future. The first step to enter into that plan is to call upon Him in prayer. If you search for God with your whole heart, He will be found (Jer 29:12-14). You can open the door to His presence through; prayer, worship and song, or through journaling. God invites us to: talk to him, sing to him, pray to him, and to listen to him. When you stop hiding and running away from the problems, God can start the healing process in your life. As you submit yourself to him, he can begin to restore you.

**II. Close the Door on Distractions**

- A. Sometimes you have to shut the door on your own thoughts, feelings, and desires. Don’t let your mind run away with you. What is trying to divide your attention? What is distracting you from his; voice, purpose, and calling on your life? Even Jesus had to close the door on people in order for certain miracles to occur (Matt 9:25). Stop allowing every voice to carry the same weight in your life. Not everyone is for you, but that is ok. God is for you, and that is the most important voice you should listen to. Don’t let useless things occupy or control your attention. Give God your full, undivided attention and affection.

**III. Take Time for Healing to Happen**

- A. Elijah stayed in the wilderness until God spoke to him (1Kings 19:3-15). So often we are in a rush to get out of out and move onto the next thing on our to do list. We live in an asap world. What if we stopped packing our schedules so tight with back-to-back events? What if we lingered in His presence and allowed for time to get lost in His word? As we allow for God to work on us by giving Him more of our time, we will find that He is healing and restoring us more and more. The ones that we value the most in life are the ones we will give our time to. If we treat our time with God as a task, we will miss out on the transformation that He has for us.

**Discussion Questions**

1. How do you open the door to God’s presence in your life on a daily basis?
2. What are the things in your life taking your attention away from God?
3. How can you arrange your schedule to give more time to God?