



SERMON NOTES

UNAFRAID

Week 5 (May 24):

“Fear of Sickness, Aging, and Death” *John 11:25-26*

The “Danse Macabre,” meaning the Dance of Death, was a motif from the late Middle Ages intended to remind people of the _____ of death.

I. Fear of Sickness

- a. While it is prudent to be vigilant about medical symptoms one may experience, Jesus encourages us not to _____.
- b. Worry is _____ a negative future that may never happen.
- c. _____ is a practice that may help you stop ruminating on a painful past and fretting about the future, so you can be present to the moment you are living right now.

II. Fear of Aging

- a. We fear growing old and becoming obsolete and _____.
- b. The prophet Joel speaks the words of God when he says, “your sons and daughters will prophesy, and your _____ men (and women) will dream dreams.”
- c. Senior adults in their 80s report better _____ even than 18-year olds.

III. Fear of Death

- a. In John 14, Jesus says, “Do not let your hearts _____,” because his Father’s house (or mansion) has many rooms and he goes to prepare a place for us.
- b. When Martha was grieving the loss of her brother Lazarus, Jesus said to her, “I am the _____ and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though they die.”
- c. The apostle Paul says that because of the resurrection of Jesus, our mortal body puts on immortality, and therefore, “Death has been swallowed up in _____.” This hope changes how we face our own death and helps us to grieve as those who have hope when we lose someone we love.

Things I Would Like to Remember About This Message

ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE • May 24-30, 2020

INTRODUCTION

Getting sick, growing old, and facing death are the three things most people fear most. Many people fear growing old and becoming obsolete or irrelevant. Many, of course, fret about their health and fear getting sick, and the current pandemic has only exacerbated those fears. What all people fear most is what may happen to them when they face death. In this message, we will explore how to reduce our anxieties around coping with illness and growing old, and how ultimately, Christ has destroyed death itself so we can face even our earthly death without fear.

Monday: Isaiah 40:27-31; 46:3-4

Today's readings likely came at a time when the Israelites were returning from their decades of exile to their land, which now lay in ruin. Can you recall a time when you felt like the Israelites in Isaiah 40:27: "My way is hidden from the LORD, my God ignores my predicament? Are there ways you feel like that right now? How can you trust in a God who "doesn't grow tired or weary" (46:3-4) of caring for you?

Tuesday: Psalm 71:17-19; 92:12-14

We live in a culture that idolizes youth, that spends vast sums to hide advancing age. Psalm 71 reminds us that God calls us to serve at all ages with open and willing hearts. Whether you are 16 or 86, can you say with the Psalmist "You've taught me since my youth, God, and I'm still proclaiming your wonderful deeds!?" How can you still influence younger siblings, children, grandchildren, or even great-grandchildren during this strange time of isolation?

Wednesday: Luke 2:25-38

While we usually read this story at Christmas time, this story highlights two prophets in their senior years, Simeon and Anna, who greet Mary and Joseph when they bring their infant son, Jesus, into the Temple. How can you, like Simeon, nurture a hopeful sense of "eager anticipation" about what God is trying to work out today? We don't know a lot about Anna, except that she "worshipped night and day." How can your faithful prayer and scripture study shape you for the days to come?

Thursday: 2 Corinthians 4:6-10, 16-18

The Apostle Paul writes about a painful time when a group of false teachers turned against him, but he does not allow the many challenges he faces defeat him. He ties his struggles to Jesus's death, which seemed to be the ultimate defeat, and yet became the ultimate victory when he rose again after three days. What has helped you when you feel crushed or depressed? Have you ever experienced the truth that "even if our bodies are breaking down on the outside, the person that we are on the inside is being renewed every day?"

Friday: Hebrews 2:14-15, 1 Corinthians 15:51-57, Revelation 21:3-5

The Apostle Paul boldly proclaimed a divine victory that death itself had been "swallowed up." Early Christians staked their lives on this truth. Does the idea of death cause you fear and anxiety? How can internalizing the full meaning of Jesus's resurrection lead you to greater peace as you await God's eternity, where death will be no more?

MOVING FORWARD

Every day is a gift from God! We are all living through a strange and challenging time, but we can continue to celebrate and give thanks, even as we may struggle with fear along the way. Take some time for yourself or with your family to intentionally be aware of the world around you. As you perhaps explore the outdoors, what do you experience through sight, sound, taste and touch? Make a list, draw pictures, or create a collage of what you experienced as you became aware of God's goodness and blessings. When you feel anxious, review your list or pictures and thank God for never leaving you and being present with you always.

Answers to the sermon notes: universality 1 a.worry b.imagining c.Mindfulness 2 a.irrelevant b.old c.wellbeing 3. a. be troubled b.Resurrection c.victory