



Small Group Study Guide

UNAFRAID

May 24, 2020
*FEAR OF SICKNESS,
AGING, AND DEATH*

OPENING PRAYER

O Gracious God, we thank you that you never leave us even at those times when we may face illness. We especially pray that you would make your healing presence known right now to all who are facing illness and all those caring for them. We thank you too, that you promise to walk with us even as we grow older, and we know that you can use our gifts through every stage of our lives. Open our hearts to serve and give you our whole lives. Thank you most of all, for going ahead of us to where we most dread going—the realm of death—and emerging ever-victorious. Help us to choose your offer of life, now and in the eternal. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES:

John 11:25-26 (CEB)

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though they die. Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.”

1 Corinthians 15:54 (NRSV)

When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

QUESTIONS

- 1) When did you first become aware that you seemed “old” to people younger than you?
- 2) Do you find it more of a challenge to not bring regrets from the past into the present or keeping fears of the future out of the present moment? How can your faith help? Have you tried a practice of Mindfulness? What helps you to be fully alive to the present moment?
- 3) When did you first experience death through the loss of a person (or perhaps a pet) who was precious to you? To what extent does your faith assure you that you will see those you love again, even when they die?
- 4) Proverbs 19:23 says, “The fear of the LORD leads to life.” In your upbringing or early experiences of church were you made to fear that God might be angry or vengeful toward you? How would you distinguish between a healthy, respectful “fear of the Lord” from the kind of fear that makes you want to avoid God’s presence? In your mind how does “fear” of the Lord lead to life?
- 5) We live most days without thinking about our mortality. How has the current pandemic changed that perspective (or not)? Have you ever had an illness or dangerous situation that you had the sense that you might die? If so, how do you relate to the possibility or eventuality of your own death? How much are you able to trust that “death has been swallowed up in victory?”