



Not to Worry Week 3 – Staring Down Death Spiritual Formation & Discussion Guide

We hope you'll use this guide to take the teaching from Sunday's service and reflect on it with a few friends or a group. If you have questions or want to talk more about how to take your next spiritual step, contact us at info@wschurch.org.

Scripture:

"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me. Your rod and your staff, they comfort me."

Psalm 23:4

Reflection Questions:

- On a scale from 1 to 10 (1 is extremely uncomfortable and 10 is excited), how eager are you to think about and talk about death?
- What stood out to you from Sunday's service? How did you sense God encouraging and challenging you through the songs, the message, and being with others as part of the church? (The message's main points and scripture are listed below if it helps you think back.)
- How do you feel about getting older and being reminded of your mortality? Are there aspects that are especially difficult to navigate?
- Eddie shared, "There's a difference between admitting death is our destiny and obsessing over it." How would you describe the difference?
- Read Psalm 23:4. This is a familiar passage, but it gives us a powerful image for God's closeness in the darkest moments. Eddie shared, "Friend, when you are close to trouble, God is close to you." Have you ever experienced this?
- It can be tempting to feel like difficult seasons detract from God's presence and productivity in our lives, but that is not how the Bible talks about it. Eddie shared several encouragements about this:
 - "The valley is part of the journey."
 - "Even good paths include dark valleys."
 - "God is with us."

How does this challenge you? How does it comfort you?"

- Eddie highlighted some things the Bible teaches us about death and what follows:
 - “when I die, my spirit and body will separate”
 - 2 Corinthians 5:6 – “We are always confident, even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord... we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord.”
 - “when I die, I will know my eternal destiny”
 - Universalists believe in universal salvation
 - Naturalists believe everyone will cease to exist entirely. No afterlife.
 - 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8 - “When the Lord Jesus appears from heaven, he will come with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, bringing judgment on those who don’t know God and on those who refuse to obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus.”

Is there anything in the Bible’s teaching about death and what happens after death that you want to dig into more?

- Read Romans 8:1-2. Take a moment to pause and remember that we put our hope in a God who has conquered death. He invites us to surrender and trust him fully in life and in death. Because of him, you are free. How can you live in that freedom and not worry even about death?
- Is there anything else from this teaching that you want to explore more?
- Take time to pray as you close your reflection or discussion, asking God to help you act on what he has asked you to do.

Looking for ways to grow spiritually?

We have a new resource, the **Write it Down Journal**, which you can get at our Next Steps Area for a suggested donation of \$3 or access online at <https://www.wschurch.org/content/pdf/SpiritualJournal.pdf>. Writing things down is a simple spiritual practice that helps us pay attention to God and what he is teaching us.

Visit www.wschurch.org/resources to see additional tools and resources.

Message Main Points and Scripture:

- **Many of us dislike being reminded of our own mortality.**
- **“I fear death.”**
- Hebrews 9:27 – “Each person is destined to die once and after that comes judgment.”
- Hebrews 2:15 – “Only in this way could he set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying.”
- 1 Corinthians 15:55 – “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?”
- Psalm 23:4 – “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me.”
- **The first death is temporary. The second death is eternal.**
- Psalm 23:4 – “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me. Your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”
- **God is with us**
- **Even good paths include dark valleys**
- Ecclesiastes 3:11 – “God has planted eternity in the human heart.”
- 1 Thessalonians 4:13 – “Dear brothers and sisters, we want you to know what will happen to the believers who have died, so you will not grieve like people who have no hope.
- **When I die, my spirit and body will separate.**
- 2 Corinthians 5:6 – “We are always confident, even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord... we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord.”
- **When I die, I will know my eternal destiny**

- **Universalists**
- **Naturalists**
- 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8 - “When the Lord Jesus appears from heaven, he will come with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, bringing judgment on those who don’t know God and on those who refuse to obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus.”
- Matthew 25:46 - “They will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life.”
- Titus 3:3-5 – “Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other. But – when God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit.”
- Romans 8:1-2 – “So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death.”