



Press On Philippians 3:10-16
February 2, 2025
By Pastor Ruthie Seiders

Group Leader Notes

Welcome to the fifth week of our current sermon series, *Under Pressure: Faith in an Anxious Age*. We have been applying ancient wisdom from Scripture to help us navigate through our modern challenges of screen addiction, anxiety, and depression, passing our faith onto younger generations and living out our faith in our daily work. Today, we are going to talk about the anxieties related to aging and death.

Questions: How do we deal with aging and death?

Bottom Line: To reduce anxiety about growing older to let go of the fear of the unknown, we must strive to know Christ, follow Jesus, bear fruit, and press on.

Memory Verse: 2Timothy 4:7-8

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

Take Home Message:

We can allay our fears of aging and death by developing a deeper relationship with God and with each other, living the way of Jesus in our thoughts, words, and actions, and never giving up hope.

Main Scripture Reading: Philippians 3:10-16

¹⁰ I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

¹² Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. ¹³ Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

¹⁵ All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, ¹⁶ that too God will make clear to you. ¹⁶ Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

Other Scripture References

Psalms 92

Philippians 3:5-8

Matthew 25:40

Teaching Points:

- “*Gerascophobia*” means fear of aging.
- Fear of aging is really a fear of the unknown
 - The first step to reducing anxiety about getting older is to KNOW CHRIST
 - The second step to reducing anxiety about getting older is to FOLLOW CHRIST and BEAR FRUIT
 - The third step to reducing anxiety about getting older is to PRESS ON

Group Discussion

Begin in prayer before reading and discussing the text.

1. Vivek Murthy, former surgeon general, said loneliness and isolation represent profound threats to our health and well-being. By taking small steps daily to strengthen our relationships and supporting community efforts to rebuild social connections, we can rise to meet this moment together. Studies show that intergenerational interaction can not only enhance the well-being of older people but also help younger people gain an appreciation of aging as a valuable and fulfilling life stage.
 - Do you believe that the younger generations in your family view aging as valuable and fulfilling?
 - Think about your own extended family. Have you encouraged the development of these relationships? If you have not, what ideas do you have to foster the growth of these connections?
2. Pastor Ruthie shared an obituary that she had written for herself, 25 years ago. This exercise is an opportunity to reflect upon where you’ve been, what you want to be remembered for, and how you would like to shape and prioritize the remaining time you have left.
 - Ask your group to write down just a few words on an index card about how they want to be remembered. Then, give everyone a chance to read what they wrote.
3. Knowing Christ is the first step to reducing anxiety about getting older.
 - *What is your relationship with Jesus like?* Ask your group to take stock of where they are on their spiritual journey.
 - If any express a desire to have a more intimate, personal relationship with God, ask more mature believers for helpful practices.
4. *Bearing fruit* refers to living the way of Jesus. Read Matthew 25:31-46.
 - In your world today, who are the *least of these*?
5. With age comes perspective. Pastor Ruthie shared personal trials and struggles that have made her more resolute in her faith. Ask volunteers to share their perspectives on how challenges have shaped their faith.

6. Read Philippians 3:13b-14. *Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*

- Why do you think it is important to *forget what is behind*?

Let's Pray

Help us Lord to know you, to follow you, to bear fruit and to press on until you call us home. May our words, our actions, our thoughts, bring you glory and point others to you, Jesus. And it is in your saving name we pray, Amen.