

Are We Not Afraid?

Study Guide

Summary

This sermon opens a series titled "I'm Not Afraid" by exploring the nature of fear and anxiety in everyday life, from childhood excitement turning into adult dread, to the top fears Americans face in 2025. Pastor Chris acknowledges that fear is a natural part of being human, but challenges the congregation to reframe their perspective by anchoring their trust in God rather than in circumstances they cannot control.

Drawing from Titus 2:11-13, John 14:1-3 and 14:25-27, Romans 8:18 and 8:31-39, and Philippians 4:4-7, the sermon reminds believers that the "blessed hope" of Christ's return is not just a future event but a present guide for how we live today. As Seventh-day Adventists, the Advent hope shapes our identity and our daily choices. Pastor Chris encourages the congregation to bring their anxieties honestly to God in prayer, take Spirit-led action, seek help when needed, and trust that even in seasons of silence, God has not abandoned them.

Key Verses

- Titus 2:13
- John 14:1-3
- John 14:27
- Romans 8:18
- Romans 8:31-39
- Philippians 4:4-7

Questions

1. Pastor Chris described how childhood excitement about receiving mail turned into adult anxiety. In what areas of your life have you noticed a similar shift from anticipation to fear as you have grown older?
2. Titus 2:13 (NIV) calls the return of Jesus our 'blessed hope.' What does it mean to you personally that your identity as a Seventh-day Adventist is rooted in the anticipation of Christ's return? How does that hope shape your daily life?
3. John 14:27 (NIV) records Jesus saying, 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives.' How is the peace that Jesus offers different from the kind of peace the world tries to provide?
4. The sermon referenced a quote about waiting: 'The presence of silence never equals the absence of God.' Have you ever experienced a season where God felt silent? Looking back, how did that season shape your faith?
5. Romans 8:31 (NIV) asks, 'If God is for us, who can be against us?' What fears or circumstances in your life make it hardest to truly believe that God is on your side?
6. Romans 8:38-39 (NIV) declares that nothing can separate us from the love of God. Which item on that list (death, life, angels, demons, present, future, powers, height, depth) feels most threatening to your sense of security right now, and why?
7. Philippians 4:6 (NIV) instructs us to present our requests to God 'in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving.' What does it look like practically to bring anxiety to God with a Spirit of thanksgiving rather than just complaint?
8. Pastor Chris emphasized that faith requires action, saying that God opens doors but we still have to walk through them. Is there a door in your life right now that you sense God has opened but fear has kept you from walking through? What would a first step look like?

Life Application

This week, identify the one thing that is causing you the most anxiety about the future. Set aside a specific time each day to bring that fear honestly to God in prayer, naming your true emotions rather than minimizing them. After praying, write down one concrete action step you can take, however small, that moves you forward in faith. At the end of the week, reflect on whether the act of praying and taking that step changed how you experienced the fear.

Key Takeaways

- Fear is a natural human experience, but as believers we are called to anchor our trust in God rather than in circumstances we cannot control.
- The blessed hope of Christ's return, described in Titus 2:13 (NIV), is not only a future promise but a present guide that shapes how Seventh-day Adventists live today.
- Even in seasons of silence, God has not abandoned us. The Holy Spirit is present to comfort, guide, and strengthen us as we wait.
- Romans 8:31-39 (NIV) assures us that nothing in all creation can separate us from the love of God, making genuine confidence in God possible even amid suffering.
- Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV) gives us a practical antidote to anxiety: bring everything to God in prayer with thanksgiving, and trust that His peace will guard our hearts and minds.