

Unafraid: Living with Courage and Hope in Uncertain Times
Week 5: Aging, Illness, Dying, and Fear of the Lord
Small Group Discussion Questions

Opening prayer: *God who breathed life into the first human in Eden, you are as near to us as our own breath. Your Spirit moves within us and around us. We are grateful for this moment and this day. Take our fears and worries about tomorrow and our regrets and hurts we carry from yesterday. We release ourselves and our time to you. Amen.*

1. In this final section of the reading, Adam Hamilton explores three types of fears: fear of growing old, fear of illness, and fear of dying. Which of these do you think is most prevalent in our society today, and why?
2. Recall one of the first occasions that you were confronted with the reality of death. Perhaps the occasion was the death of a pet or grandparent. How did it affect you? Who helped you deal with what you were feeling?
3. In the section titled “When Older=Happier” in Chapter 17, Hamilton notes that, according to surveys, people in their seventies or older are among the happiest. Read out loud the list of reasons in this section. Which of the reasons seems surprising? When have you seen some of these reasons confirmed? What other reasons would you add to the list?
4. In Chapter 18, LaVon Hamilton discusses her own experience with an anxiety disorder in the section titled “Chasing Anxiety Disorder Out into the Light.” Re-read the paragraphs LaVon wrote. If you had the symptoms LaVon describes, would you consider that anxiety might be involved? What do you appreciate about the way LaVon relates her experience?
5. In Chapter 19, Adam Hamilton addresses Christian beliefs about death and heaven. Review the section titled “The Christian View of Death and What Comes After.” In what ways is this vision of death different from the visions we see in popular culture?
6. In Scott’s sermon today, he explains the Apostle Paul’s metaphor “We have a treasure in clay jars” as a way of dealing with adversity. What does a clay jar signify for you? What is the ‘treasure’ that Paul refers to? How does this metaphor speak to us in the context of the coronavirus pandemic?