

**Step One**

Accept That We Are Not God  
and We Will All Die

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**Big Word for This Session: TRUTH**

And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

— JOHN 8:32, TLB

1. What surprised Hattie about her mom's death?

1. What surprised Hattie about her mom's death?

- Dad didn't step up. He thought since clinicians were doing for Mom that she was going to get up and walk out! He asked no questions.
- No one saw her living will.
- Doctors do not make end-of-life care decisions. Most Doctors want nothing to do with death—it's not in their interest.

2. What experiences have you had watching people die or caring for people towards the \*end of life?

\*In 2022, thought leaders in palliative medicine are no longer talking so much about end of life—they are talking about “serious illness.”

3. Were the people you knew spiritually mature? Did they find it easy to accept their situation or did they struggle with denial/fear?

4. How does denying the reality of our death affect us?

Why is it so hard for us to even talk about death?

Dr. Jack McNulty believes that people think if they talk about death they might catch it.

Should this be different for someone with faith in Jesus? Why or why not?



Too bad too many  
Christians are leaving  
this world kicking and  
screaming!

This study helps  
the believer  
understand how  
to make the best  
use of modern  
medicine without  
expecting it to do  
things that it can't.

Brian Elkins, MD

What is the kicking and screaming about?  
Mostly it's about fear, right?

Victoria York writes in *Created for Fearlessness*,  
“Chronic fear and anxiety have no  
place in a believer's life.  
Chronic fear (anxiety) is idolatry.  
It leads to anger, manipulation,  
escapism, passivity and  
co-dependency.”

5. What can we do to grow wise, loving,  
and free from the fear of death?

Be transformed by the renewing of our minds. Romans 12:2



As Christians, we want to reject what our secular culture calls death—and reframe this to mean, for us, a leaving or our escape from the confines of physicality. Jesus made it perfectly clear that those of us who put our confidence in him will not “taste” death.

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Can I get an AMEN?



Need 7 volunteers to read later in our discussion.

1 Corinthians 15:54-57

2 Corinthians 5:6-8

John 8:51

Matthew 22:31-32

Mark 9:1

Luke 9:27

Matthew 16:28



“Without our even knowing it, fear of death is a slave master binding us with invisible ropes, confining us to small, safe, innocuous, self-centered lives. Jesus sets us free!”

-John Piper, pastor and author

From Reading 1



5. What is the promise of John 11:26?

Jesus said to Martha,

“Whoever lives  
believing in me  
will never die.

Do you believe this?”

6. What is the promise of Romans 8:18?  
What awaits a Christian beyond this life?

“Our present sufferings  
are not worth comparing  
with the glory that will be  
revealed in us.”

7. One of the reasons we fear death is because we haven't thought about death enough to form our own belief about it.

Why is it good or even helpful to think about death?

We all need death literacy. What is aging, loss of functionality, loss of loved ones, loss of a home we loved teaching us?

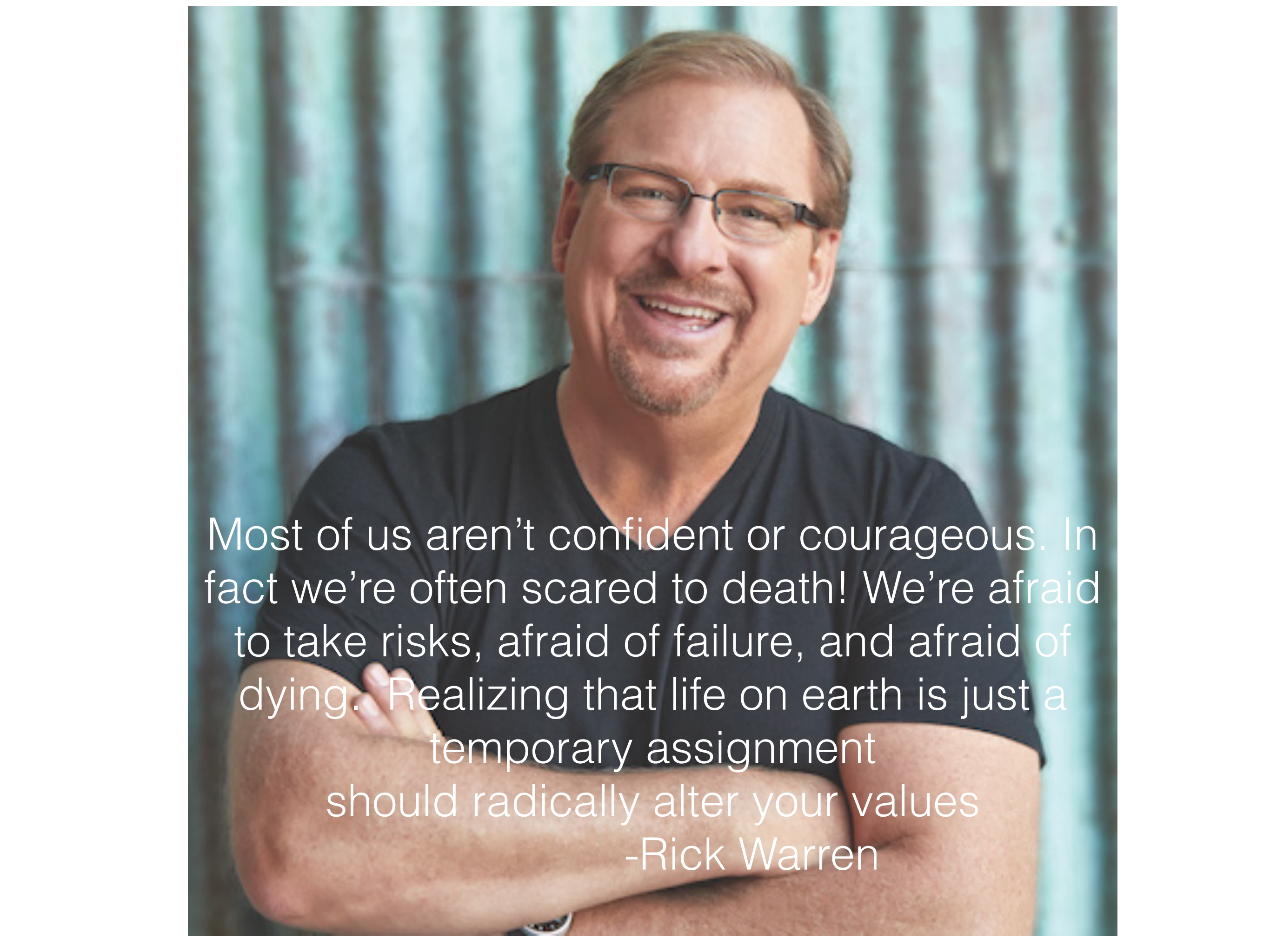
We are experiencing a natural progression that resulted from The Fall.

## Video clip from FAQs: [Is Death Painful?](#)

Q: Is death painful?

A: The journey to death can be painful. Most deaths are not painful. The palliative care team is very good at alleviating physical pain and discomfort. They use medications that calm down the patient to provide pain control and that are increased as needed by an attentive hospice/palliative care nurse. But doctors **can't** help your internal fears or emotional angst. This is the reason they call in the chaplains, the social workers, the psychologists and even musicians. Nurses have told me a lot about their experiences with many deaths and in general they agree that death is a letting go. There are even natural endorphins produced as if God created our bodies to wind down and out pain-free.

I have had limited experience with watching death happen myself so I will tell you what my pastor, who has been at the bedside of hundreds in his 35 years as a pastor says. He says, "Dying is no big deal. It is natural. For the people in my congregation who are spiritually mature, it is a worshipful experience to watch them leave."



Most of us aren't confident or courageous. In fact we're often scared to death! We're afraid to take risks, afraid of failure, and afraid of dying. Realizing that life on earth is just a temporary assignment should radically alter your values  
-Rick Warren

8. Why would a dying woman say, “Dying doesn’t cause suffering; resistance to dying causes suffering”?

What is resistance?

Hint: denial, anger, fear, anxiety, worry



But me?

God snatches me from the clutch of death,  
he reaches down and grabs me.

We aren't immortal, we don't last long.

Like our dogs, we age. We weaken and we die.

-Psalm 49:15,20

The Message

One of your favorite scriptures?

No, we prefer...

The Lord is my Shepherd  
Our Father who art in heaven  
My peace I leave you  
For God so loved the world  
Cast your cares on Him

11. Are you ready to let go and let God have your mind, body, and soul? If not, why not? Places to go? People to see? Think to do? Things to learn?

## 12. Modern medicine has tools for our physical pain.

Terminal sedation is legal. We have benzodiazepines or opiates for pain, delirium, nausea, anxiety, stress. HOWEVER much suffering is existential—feeling of meaninglessness, feeling of being a burden to others.

**Medicine is too small to handle  
our spiritual/emotional/psychological pain.**

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What happens in your spirit when these scriptures are read out loud in this group with your friends?

1 Corinthians 15:54-57

2 Corinthians 5:6-8

John 8:51

Matthew 22:31-32

Mark 9:1—Luke 9:27— Matthew 16:28

CHRIST TASTED DEATH FOR EVERYONE WHO HAS FAITH

Does God's word get you spiritually ready to relax into your forever?

John Gill (1697-1771) was a Baptist pastor and theologian. He studied the life and times of the Jewish people in their languages—medieval Aramaic and medieval Hebrew. He studied the Torah and its commentaries. He writes that Jewish doctors frequently said....

“The children of the world taste death.”

**JESUS**

turns this popular medical teaching on its head—He promises,

**“Truly I tell you,  
Some of you standing here,  
will not taste death.”**

Who do you believe?

In his sermon

“When You’re Hoping for a Miracle,”

Rick Warren refers to Elisabeth Kubler-Ross work published in her book *On Death and Dying* to describe how spiritually unprepared people react to a difficult diagnosis.

**Denial** (a form of fear) = This is not happening to me!

**Anger** = Why is this happening to me?

**Bargaining** = I promise to \_\_\_\_\_ if you’ll let me live!

**Depression** = I just don’t care anymore.

**Acceptance** = I’m ready for whatever happens.

We are stuck in adolescence. - Richard Rohr

adolescent inside and out



adolescent inside elder outside



We try to stop physical aging  
and can refuse to grow up spiritually and emotionally.

Why will it be hard for us to do what Rick Warren says?

Why should we be able to move through the first four stages sooner than later when facing death?

1. Denial (a form of fear) = This is not happening to me!
2. Anger = Why is this happening to me?
3. Bargaining = I promise to \_\_\_\_\_ if you'll let me live!
4. Depression = I just don't care anymore.  
(Makes us a very unpleasant patient creating strain between us and caregivers and family.)
5. Acceptance = I'm ready for whatever happens.  
(You are the best patient ever!)

OOPS.

1. We are just not as grown up **spiritually** as we think we are.
2. The people around us won't let us be grown up and can drag us into their fear and anxiety.



13b. What would our acceptance that death is coming look like to others?

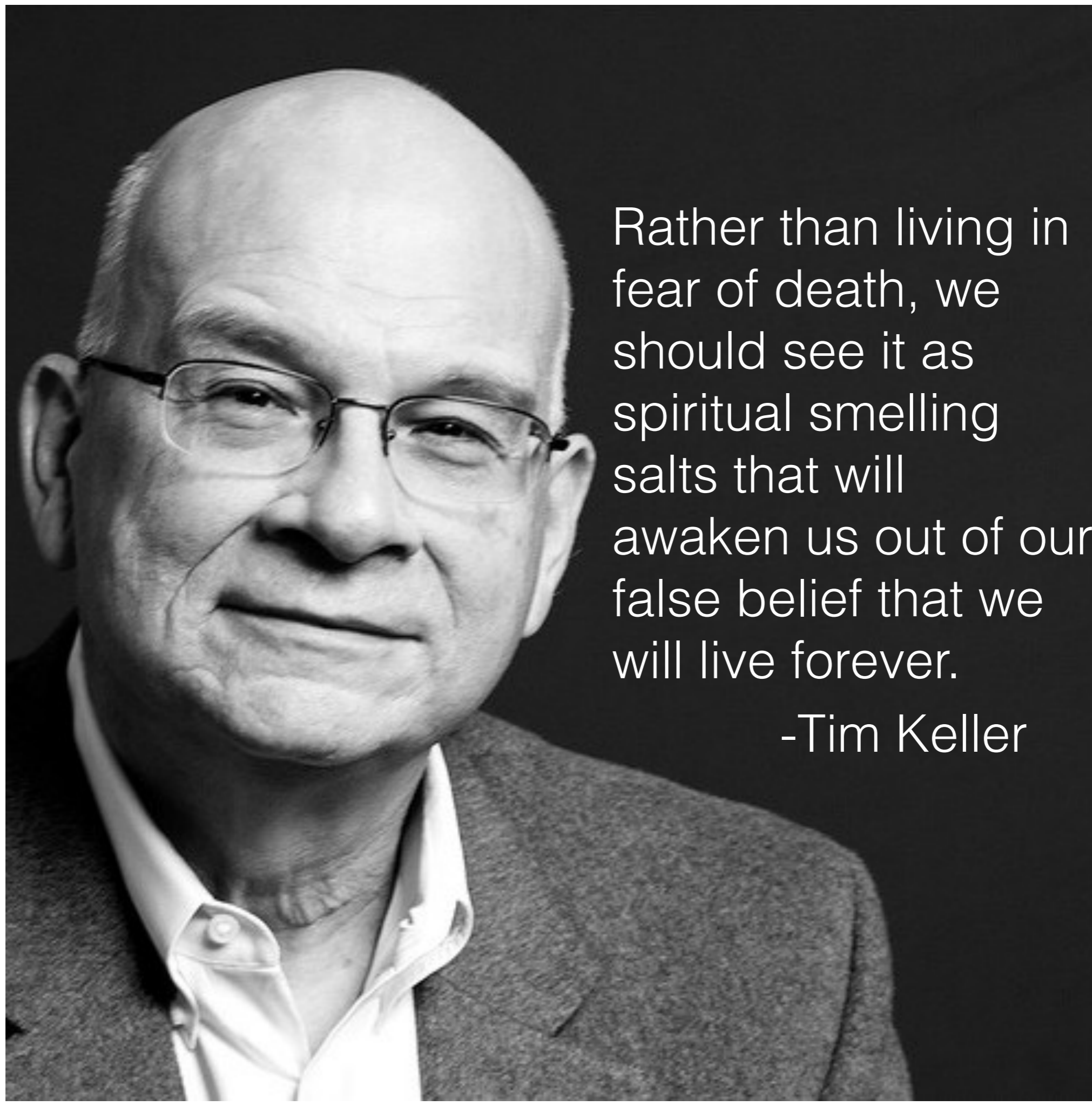
13c. Can you imagine that it will be easier for you to accept the fact that you are dying when that time comes than it will be for your family to accept the fact that you are dying?

Have you observed loved ones being stuck in these stages?



Our love of the good things of life gives death power over us. Death is a siphoning process that separates us from what we love so that, in the end, everyone loses everything....We have to learn to love more what can't be lost.

Pastor Matthew McCullough  
*Remember Death:  
The Surprising Path to Living Hope*



Rather than living in fear of death, we should see it as spiritual smelling salts that will awaken us out of our false belief that we will live forever.

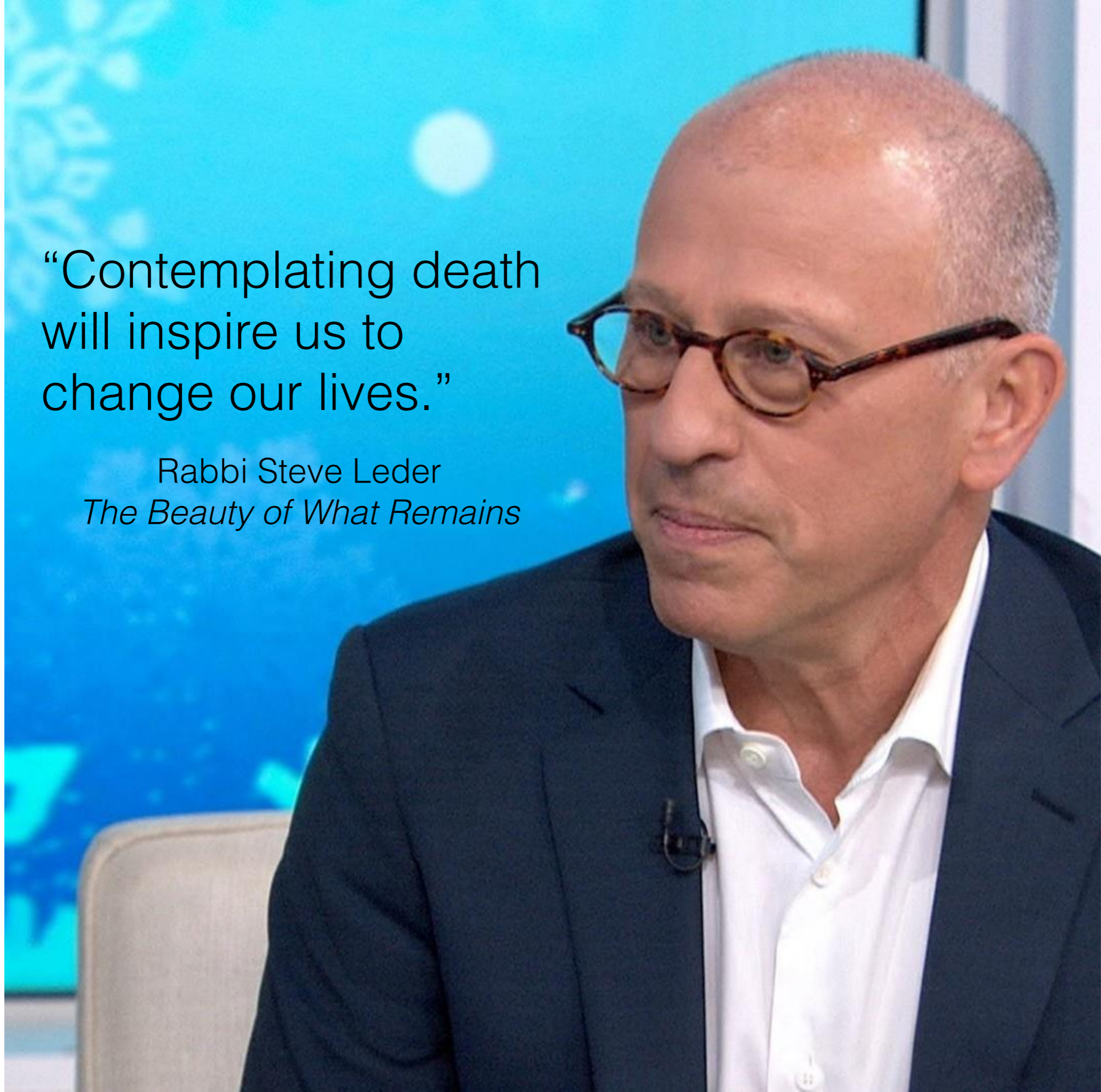
-Tim Keller

“Faith is at the very least the  
refusal to panic.”

Martyn Lloyd-Jones

“Contemplating death  
will inspire us to  
change our lives.”

Rabbi Steve Leder  
*The Beauty of What Remains*



Father, help us see what you want us to see.

Dispel any fears or anxieties we have  
about our own death and the  
deaths of those we love.

Set us free!

In Christ's name we ask. Amen

# Before Session Two

Please read the assignment found on page 16.

See you next time!