

SESSION SIX

Start Living in
God's Kingdom Now



Big Word for This Session: JOY

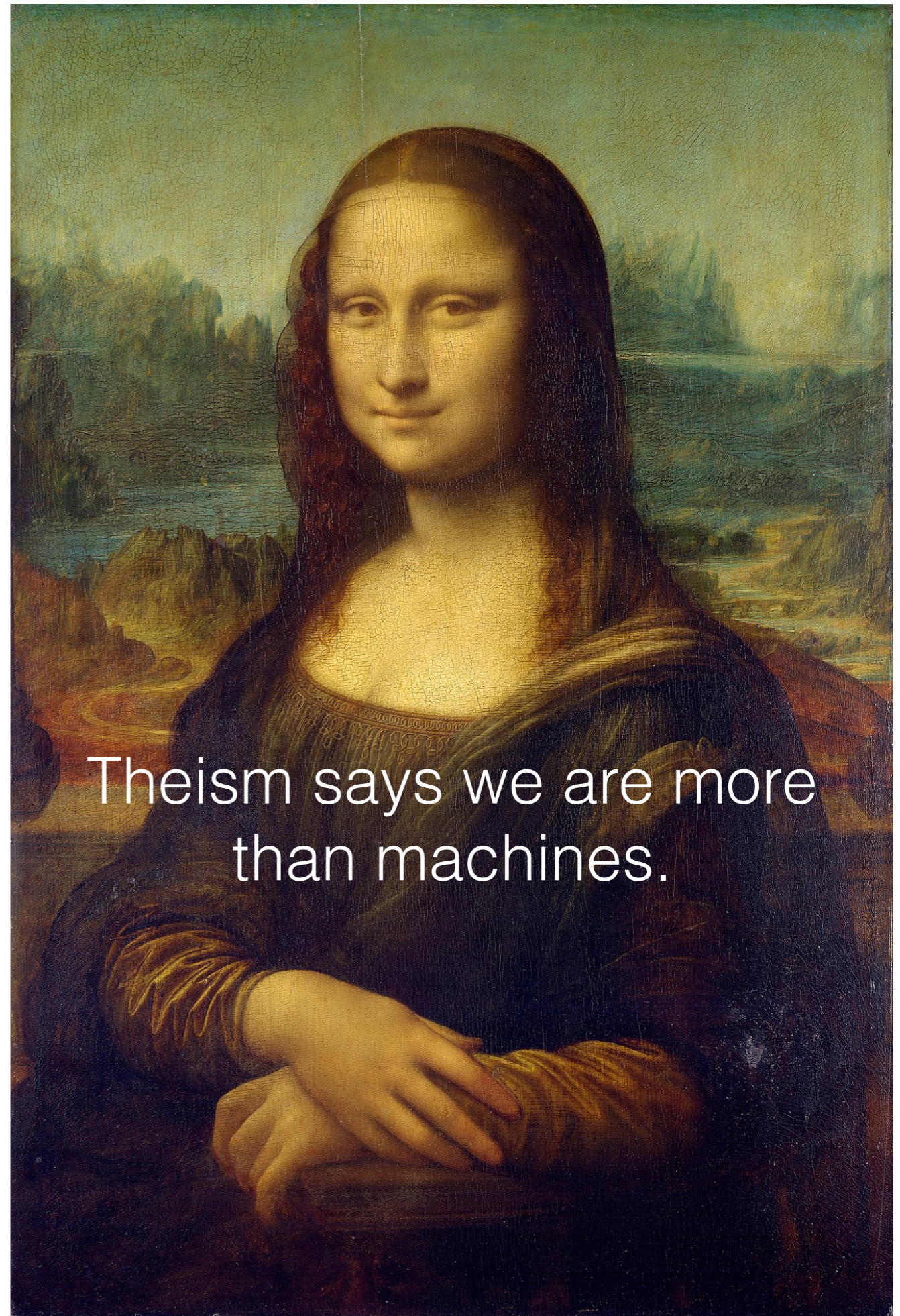
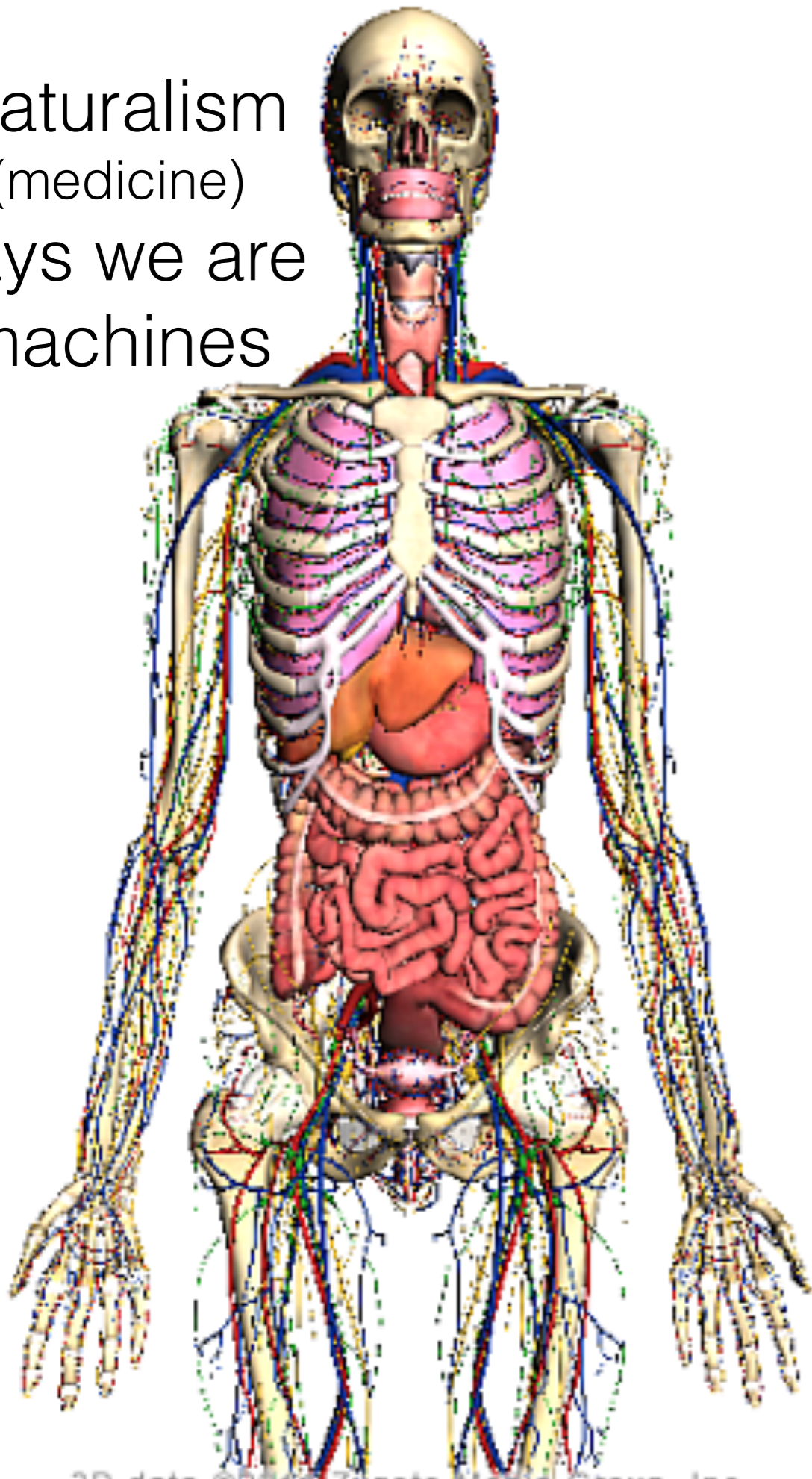
*From now on, then, you must live the rest of our earthly lives
controlled by God's will and not by human desires.*

— 1 PETER 4:2, GNT

Where do we get this JOY?

It comes from soulcare
not healthcare.

Naturalism
(medicine)
says we are
machines



Theism says we are more
than machines.

1. Had it ever occurred to you that you will die the way you have lived? How did you react when you first read that statement on page 121?

2. What can you do about this?

3. Have you spent a lot of time trying to change other people? How did that go?

Let's stop working on others and work on ourselves.



I am suggesting a massive heart change to get you back to your true self as God made you. It's not so much a getting of new self, as it is a letting go of what has been piled on you. How can we even breathe with all of this? Religious people tend to tweak around the edges, but that won't get us what God wants for us—true union with him.

4. Circle the words that you think describe what might be taking up space in your heart, and then share afterward.

FEAR ANGER CONTEMPT BITTERNESS WORRY PRIDE

ANXIETY REGRET REMORSE SELF-CENTEREDNESS ENVY JEALOUSY

“I will put anxiety (a faintness) in the hearts
of you who survive in the land of
Your enemies.”

Leviticus 26:36

Anxiety is chronic FEAR
fear is usually specific; anxiety is always

Disobedience=anxiety=a curse

Page 135 These addictions make us heart sick.
These addictions manifest into physical illness.
New study links poor sleep habits with dementia.

<https://www.everydayhealth.com/emotional-health/big-ways-forgiveness-is-good-for-your-health/>
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/15694874/>

This preliminary study suggests there is a relationship between forgiveness and pain, anger, and psychological distress in patients with chronic low back pain. Patients who report an inability to forgive others might be experiencing higher pain and psychological distress that are mediated by relatively higher levels of state anger.

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/forgiveness-your-health-depends-on-it>

<https://www.arthritis.org/health-wellness/healthy-living/emotional-well-being/emotional-self-care/the-emotion-pain-connection>

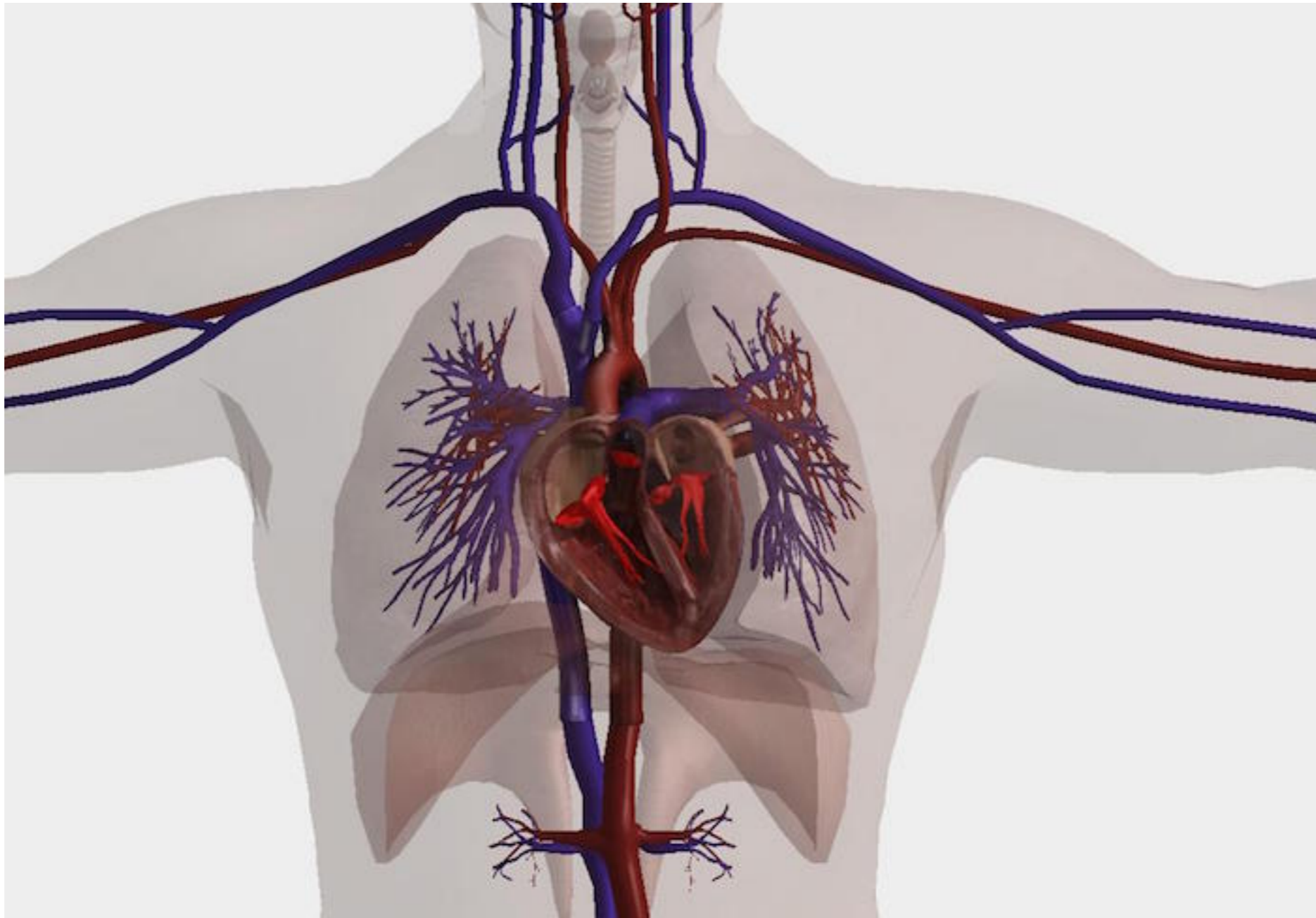
Chronic **pain and emotions** are so intertwined, in fact, says psychiatrist and palliative medicine physician David Buxton, MD, that's it's often hard to tell where one ends and the other begins. People with depression, for example, have about three times the risk of those without it of developing chronic pain. And, those with chronic pain have about the same increase in risk for winding up with clinical depression.

Defining Anxiety and Depression

According to the American Psychological Association:

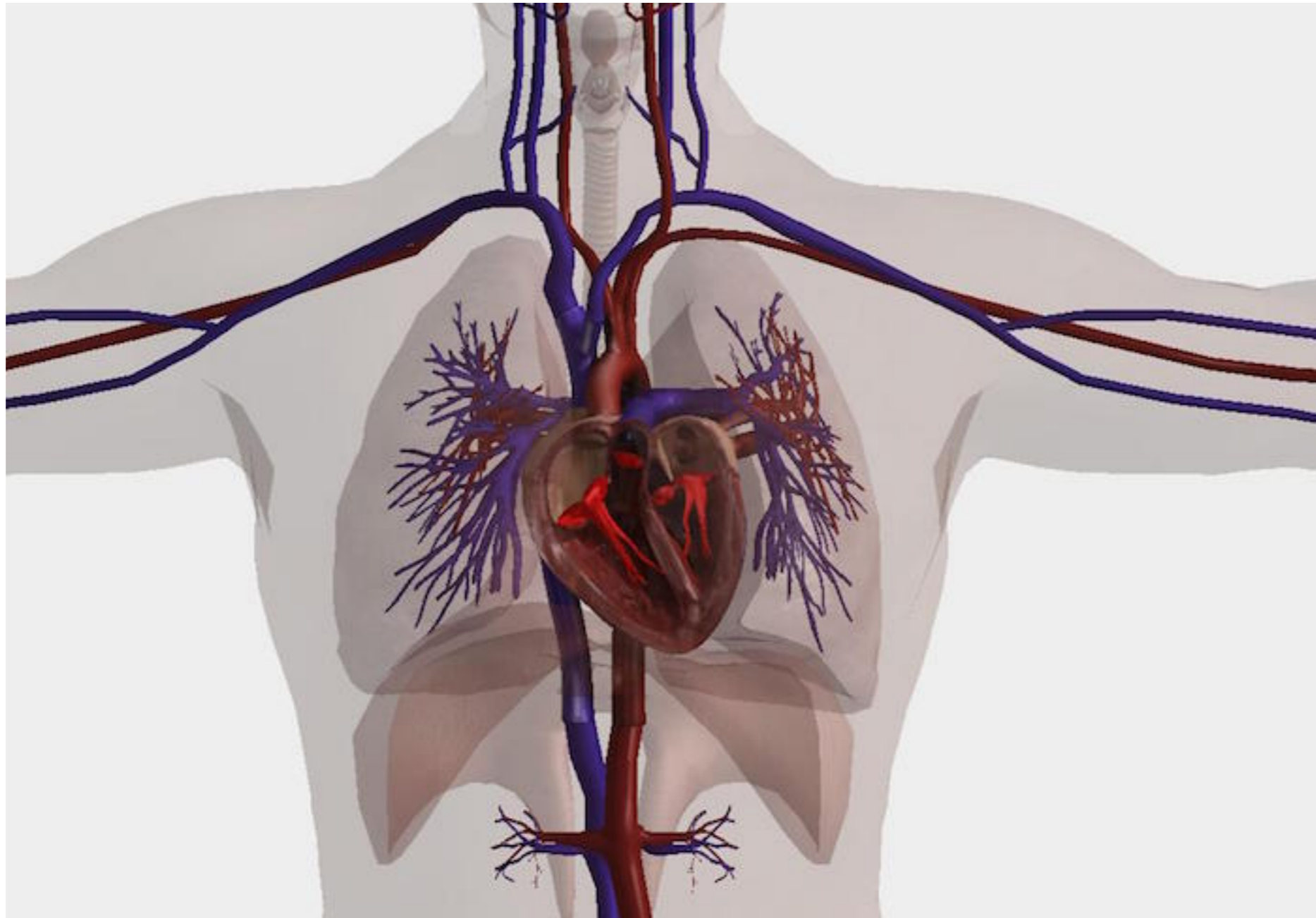
- Anxiety is characterized by feelings of tension, worry and irritability along with physical changes like increased blood pressure.
- Depression is characterized by sadness, a lack of interest in daily activities, weight loss or gain, sleeplessness or excessive sleeping, lack of energy, inability to concentrate, feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt, and recurrent thoughts of death or suicide.

The Great Physician
will give us a Kingdom heart that overflows and
put us on the gentle path to peace for today and
for every single day into our forever.



The body is the
storehouse
of undigested emotional
material.

-Father Thomas Keating



We need elective open heart surgery.
Either cut it out or scrape it out to refill.

We can have a new Kingdom heart now.

Don't have to wait for our body to fall away to be made perfect.

5. What connection can you see between thoughts/emotions and behavior?
What has to be cut out or scraped out?

2 Timothy 3:2-5 (The Message)

Don't be naive. As the end approaches people are going to be self-absorbed...in love with their pain-free lives full of pleasure...and allergic to God.

This is discouraging. Without help this is our default.

6. Deuteronomy 10:16 says,

Therefore, circumcise your heart and stop being stubborn!
What does it mean to circumcise your heart?

Cut off the calluses.

What does it mean to be stubborn?

It means our habits/addictions have piled up and calcified.

Do you think you can fix yourself?

The cut-it-out fix.

6. Read out loud Deuteronomy 30:6

And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring,
so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul,
that you may live.

Don't try this on your own. It is not a DIY project.

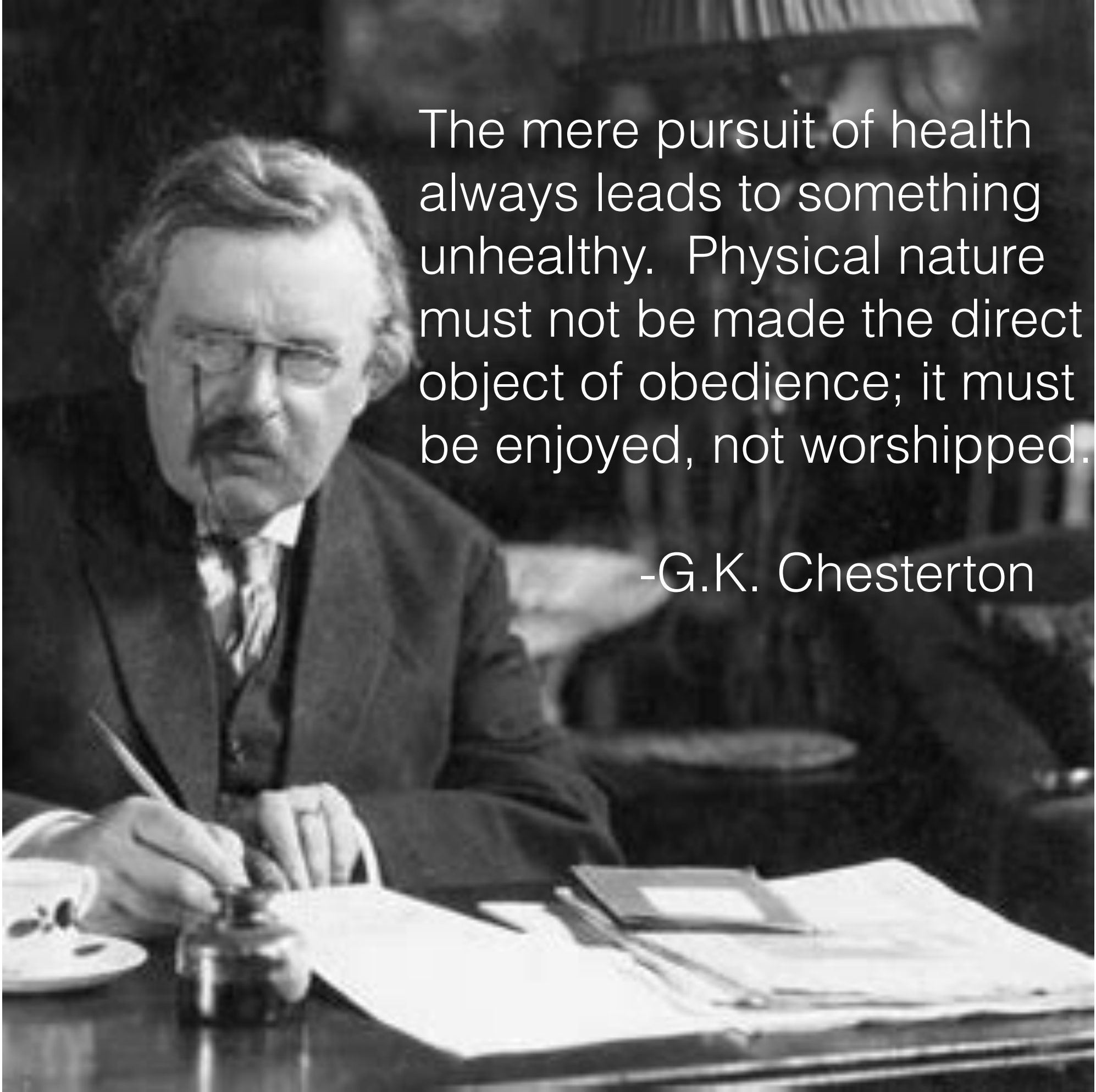
7. Read out loud Matthew 5:8 (KJV)

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Does this verse scare you? Why?

I don't imagine myself pure and I'm a loser and I fall short and I keep falling back on my worldly worldview and keep acting like people who don't have Christ and, and, and.

WAIT! God to the rescue. Jesus saves us from our silly, small selves. The Holy Spirit is here, now...teaching, whispering, nudging, guiding, encouraging.



The mere pursuit of health
always leads to something
unhealthy. Physical nature
must not be made the direct
object of obedience; it must
be enjoyed, not worshipped.

-G.K. Chesterton

Who will read this found on the bottom page 135?

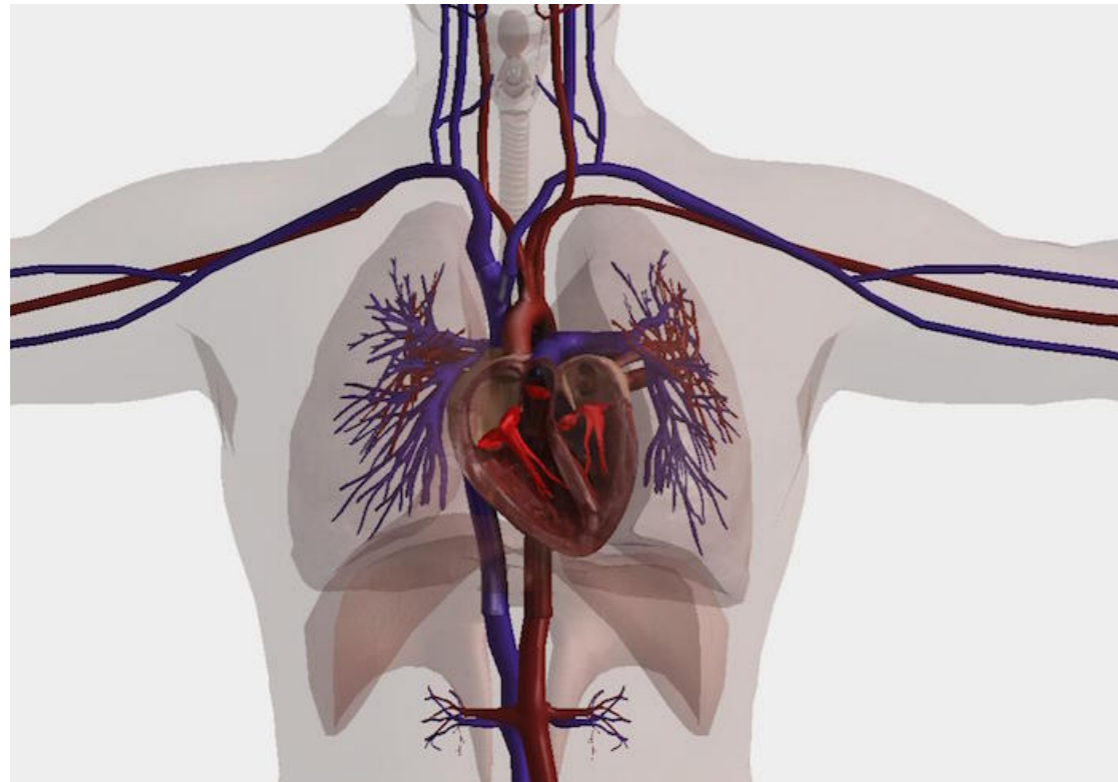
One dying woman told a nurse that she felt herself clearing out of the way, so God could fill her.

Could we do this each morning as we wake?

Yes, we could wake up praying...

“Father, clear out my fears, worries, anxieties, negative thoughts about myself, and any emotion or word patterns that occupy my mind and heart—then come fill me with you. All I want Father is to know you better and love you more.”

Sleep is rehearsal for death. Rest in the arms of God.



The Great Physician
is the soulcare doctor.
He doesn't charge
us for his services;
he only wants
our whole heart.

Why agree to this elective surgery when we are doing just fine with our habits of fear, worry, anxiety, anger, bitterness, regret, remorse, pride, self-importance, entitlement?

We're not just fine.
Let's kick our addiction to this world.
Our loving God has better for us.

let's kick the habit of fear, worry, anxiety, anger,
contempt, bitterness, pride, regret,
self-centeredness

NOTE: 2/3 of pastors have trouble trusting God.

LifeWay Research of 1,000 pastors
Study released January 2022

The emptying/filling fix...

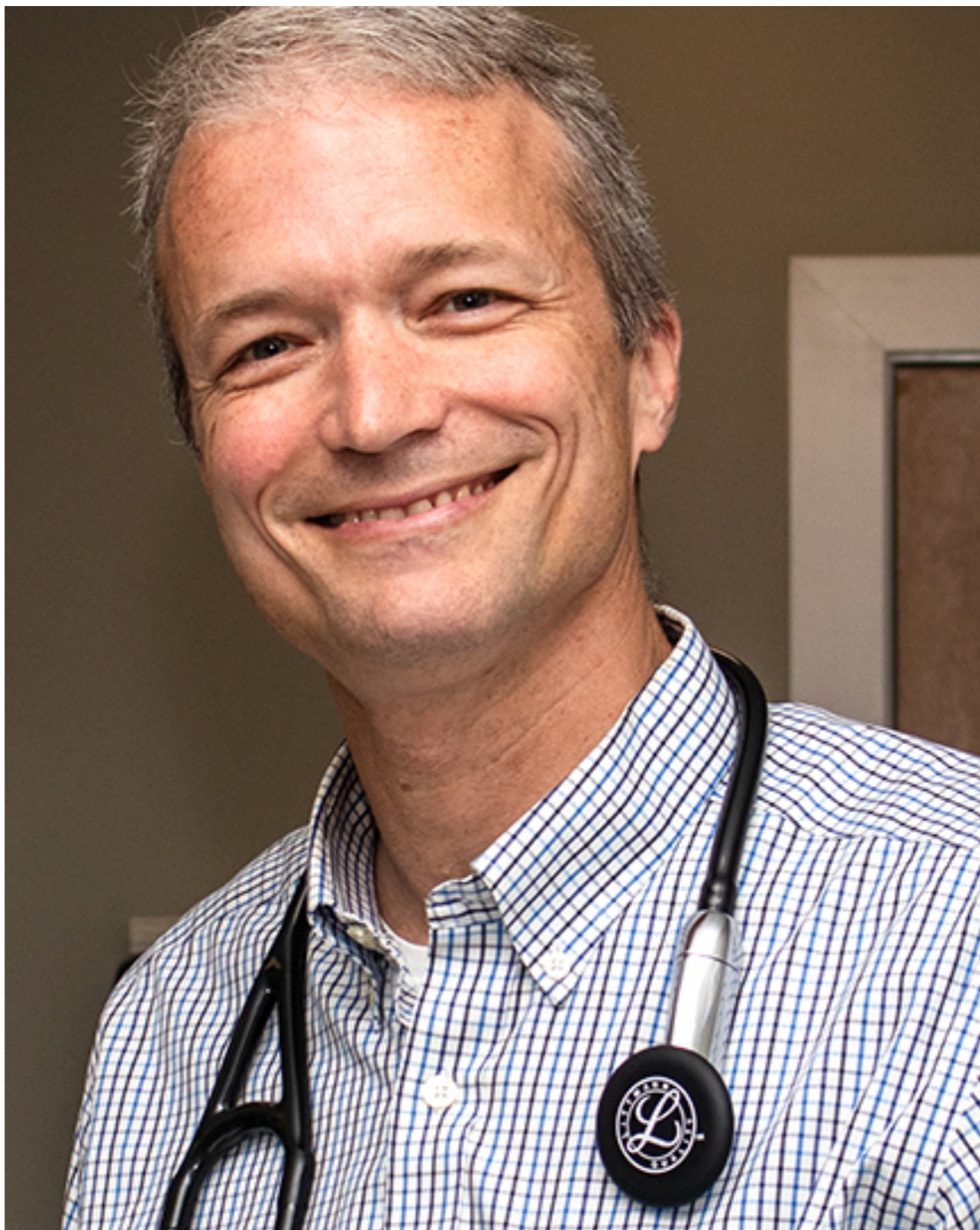
Make way for your Kingdom heart. (Empty so God can fill.)

Read out loud 2 Peter 1:2-4 (NET)

2 May grace and peace be lavished on you as you grow in the rich knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord!

3 I can pray this because his divine power has bestowed on us everything necessary for life and godliness through the rich knowledge of the one who called us by his own glory and excellence.

4 Through these things he has bestowed on us his precious and most magnificent promises, so that by means of what was promised you may become partakers of the divine nature, after escaping the worldly corruption that is produced by evil desire.

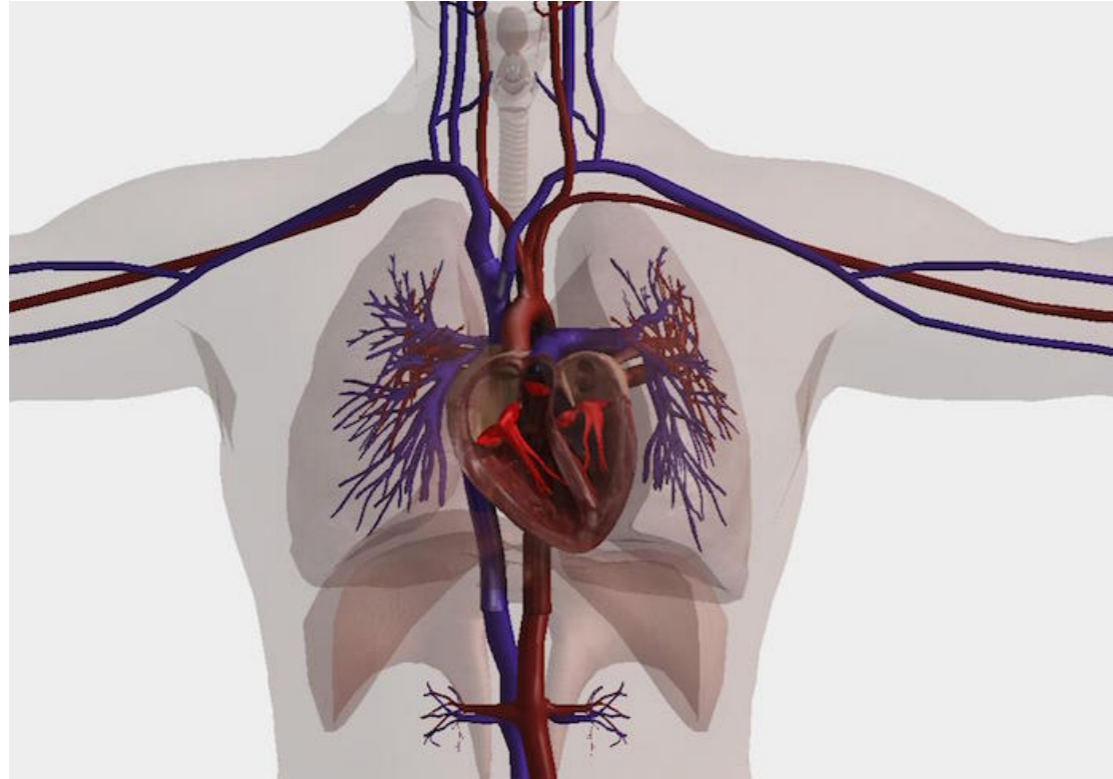


Too bad too many
Christians are leaving
this world kicking and
screaming!

Brian Elkins, MD

What does our
kicking and
screaming tell
others about us?

What about 2 Corinthians 5:17? We are not merely
human. We are new—new creatures.
Immune to death. We can't catch it.



Schedule your appointment with
The Great Physician.

No wait times. He'll fill you with just what you need.

love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness,
kindness, faithfulness, and self control

“Joy is the air
of the
Kingdom of God.”

-Gary Black, Jr.
Preparing for Heaven



8. What does a heart-healthy diet look like? Step up to the banquet of Colossians 3 (The Message)

3 1-2 So if you're serious about living this new resurrection life with Christ, *act* like it. Pursue the things over which Christ presides. Don't shuffle along, eyes to the ground, absorbed with the things right in front of you. Look up, and be alert to what is going on around Christ—that's where the action is. See things from *his* perspective.

3-4 Your old life is dead. Your new life, which is your *real* life—even though invisible to spectators—is with Christ in God. *He* is your life. When Christ (your real life, remember) shows up again on this earth, you'll show up, too—the real you, the glorious you. Meanwhile, be content with obscurity, like Christ.

12-14 So, chosen by God for this new life of love, dress in the wardrobe God picked out for you: compassion, kindness, humility, quiet strength, discipline. Be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offense. Forgive as quickly and completely as the Master forgave you. And regardless of what else you put on, wear love. It's your basic, all-purpose garment. Never be without it.

15-17 Let the peace of Christ keep you in tune with each other, in step with each other. None of this going off and doing your own thing. And cultivate thankfulness. Let the Word of Christ—the Message—have the run of the house. Give it plenty of room in your lives. Instruct and direct one another using good common sense. And sing, sing your hearts out to God! Let every detail in your lives—words, actions, whatever—be done in the name of the Master, Jesus, thanking God the Father every step of the way.



“Bad news is something that disrupts the patient’s and family’s sense of the future.”

-Robert Arnold, MD
Founder of Vital Talk

University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine
Director of Palliative Medicine and Medical Ethics

What is the future for us as Christians?

Want JOY?
Set your heart and
mind on heaven!



Remember this on page 17?

	TRUE	FALSE
I'm afraid of the dying process	Now I understand the process so fear is gone.	I don't have to hang around.
I'm afraid to die	No. I KNOW I am a never-ceasing soul.	I'm not dying.
Others depend upon me	I am now talking freely with all.	My leaving is no longer a taboo topic.
Others depend upon my financial resources	Have and will continue to act to fix this in the next few months.	
I'm afraid my spouse will fall apart without me	Have engaged in an ongoing discussion with my directive as the tool.	
I can't afford to die	Have prepared for the handling of my body/created a new budget.	
I'm afraid of a long, slow decline	I am practicing solitude/contemplative prayer/journaling scripture.	
I'm afraid my children will fight over my assets	Expanded my conversation from healthcare to finances put asset will in place with a 3rd party executor.	
I'm not sure of my salvation	Have prayed a fresh prayer.	
I'm not sure of the resurrection	Have confessed my doubt—received the promise.	
I'm not sure there's a heaven	Will study scripture on heaven and read lots of books about heaven!	
I don't want to be a burden on my family	Have named a proxy that can do the job/have Circle of Care and provided clear instructions.	
I don't want to lose my independence	Plan how to age in place not just what I want but what works for all.	
I have financial obligations I don't want to leave to others	Plan/Act to reduce my expenses to reduce my debt.	
I don't want to be in pain	Work as much on my spiritual health as my physical health then engage palliative clinicians early when I become weak/frail.	
I haven't done all that I dreamed I would do with my life	I now know I have eternity to go to Patagonia.p.140	
I've made mistakes I'd like to fix	Restoration of all things. God works with me in the new heaven/new earth. I can make new choices.	
I have regrets	Jesus hears my confessions, casts out sins as far as the east is from the west then gives me a chance to improve in HIM.	

Any statement that you marked TRUE reveals a concern that will keep you in denial. This is not where God wants you to be.

2. Prioritize the worries you marked "True" by numbering them in order of how you should work to resolve them.

My Page 18

2. Prioritize the concerns you marked "True" by numbering them. The number you should work to resolve them.

Ps. 46:10 Best I understand now.

= spiritual development goals!

soulcare meets healthcare

3. Make a list of steps you can take to work on each of those worries.

Here's a start!

+ Long slow decline: get used to being quiet; to being alone; to being still

I will strive to do these things over the course of this six-week study.

Find deep inner peace

He who started a good thing in me will complete me.
Philippians 1:6

- Plan my own memorial service this week
- Provide information for my own obituary in week two
- Provide direction for my eulogy in week three
- Using these pages to create written instructions about how I want to live the last few years, months, weeks and days of this life
- Think hard to choose a healthcare proxy who has the qualities needed to represent me if the time comes that I can't speak to clinicians for myself
- Create a circle of care in week four
- Distribute my instructions to my circle of care (pages 157-164) in week five
- Put the plan in place for my burial. (Paying for this now can save thousands of dollars.)
- Create a "When I Die" file that will include "My Gift to My Circle of Care" and other documents including:

- Will
- Power of Attorney
- Life insurance
- Health insurance
- 401(k) and other investments
- Pension documents
- Annuity contracts
- List of bank accounts
- List of all user names and passwords
- Deeds and Titles to Property
- Vehicle titles

4. In the "Looking at Yourself" exercise, if you checked "true" to, "I don't want to be a burden to my family." can you see how taking these

When you're tired of suffering too much with a chronic disease or when given a life-limiting diagnosis, relax into the arms of the Great Physician. Laugh, put a permanent smile on your face. You're going home and you might even bring your own physicians to Christ as they watch you.

One woman did this and we can too.

The God of the Bible is also the God of the genome. He can be worshiped in the cathedral or the laboratory.

-Francis Collins
PhD, MD



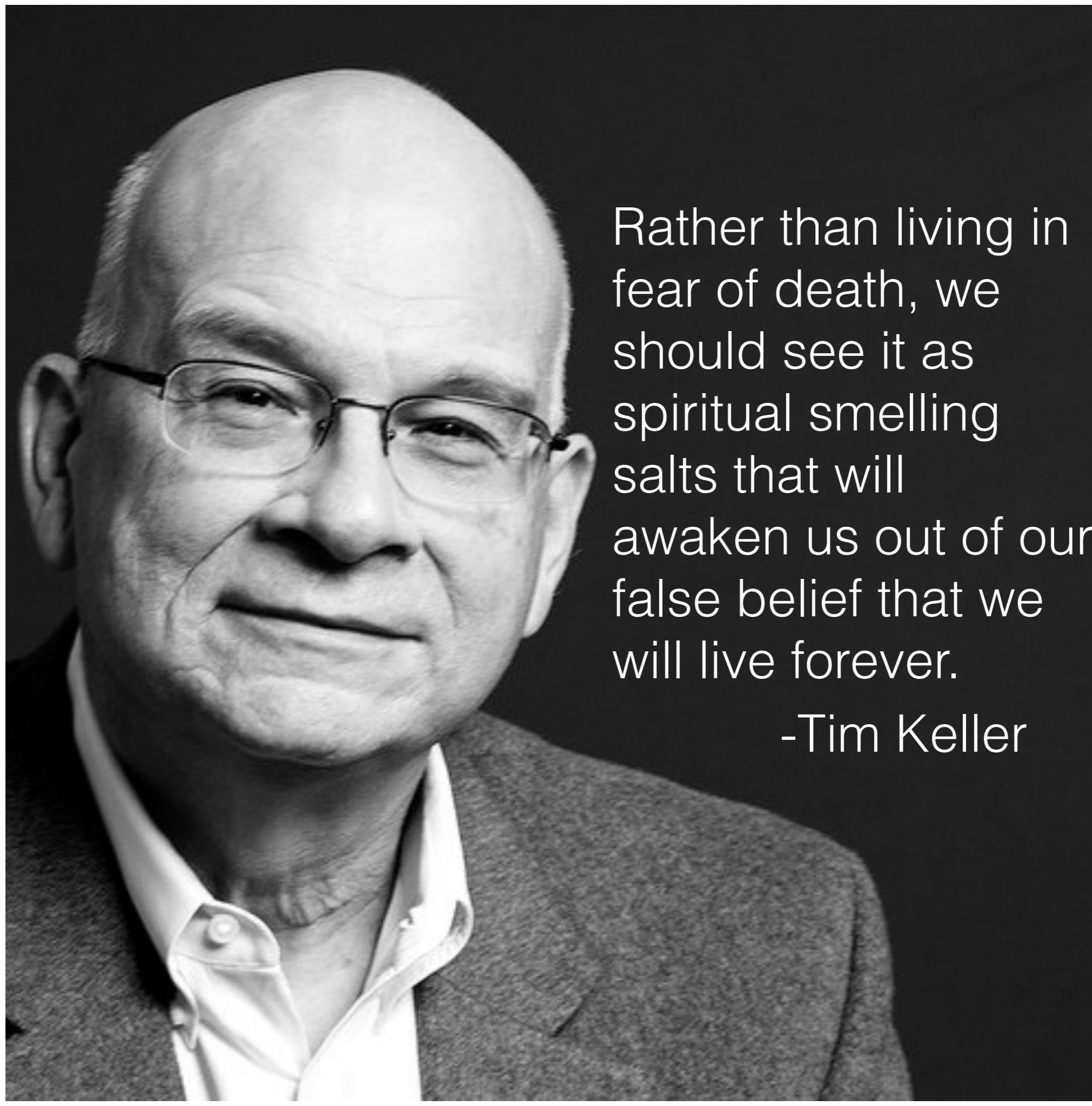
His patient asked him, "What do you believe?"

Do **our** fears and anxieties
bring anyone to Jesus?

“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





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

Dr. Keller died at the age of 72 on May 19, 2023. In May 2020 he was diagnosed with stage 4 pancreatic cancer. He said he had great doctors and that he was being attended to by The Great Physician.

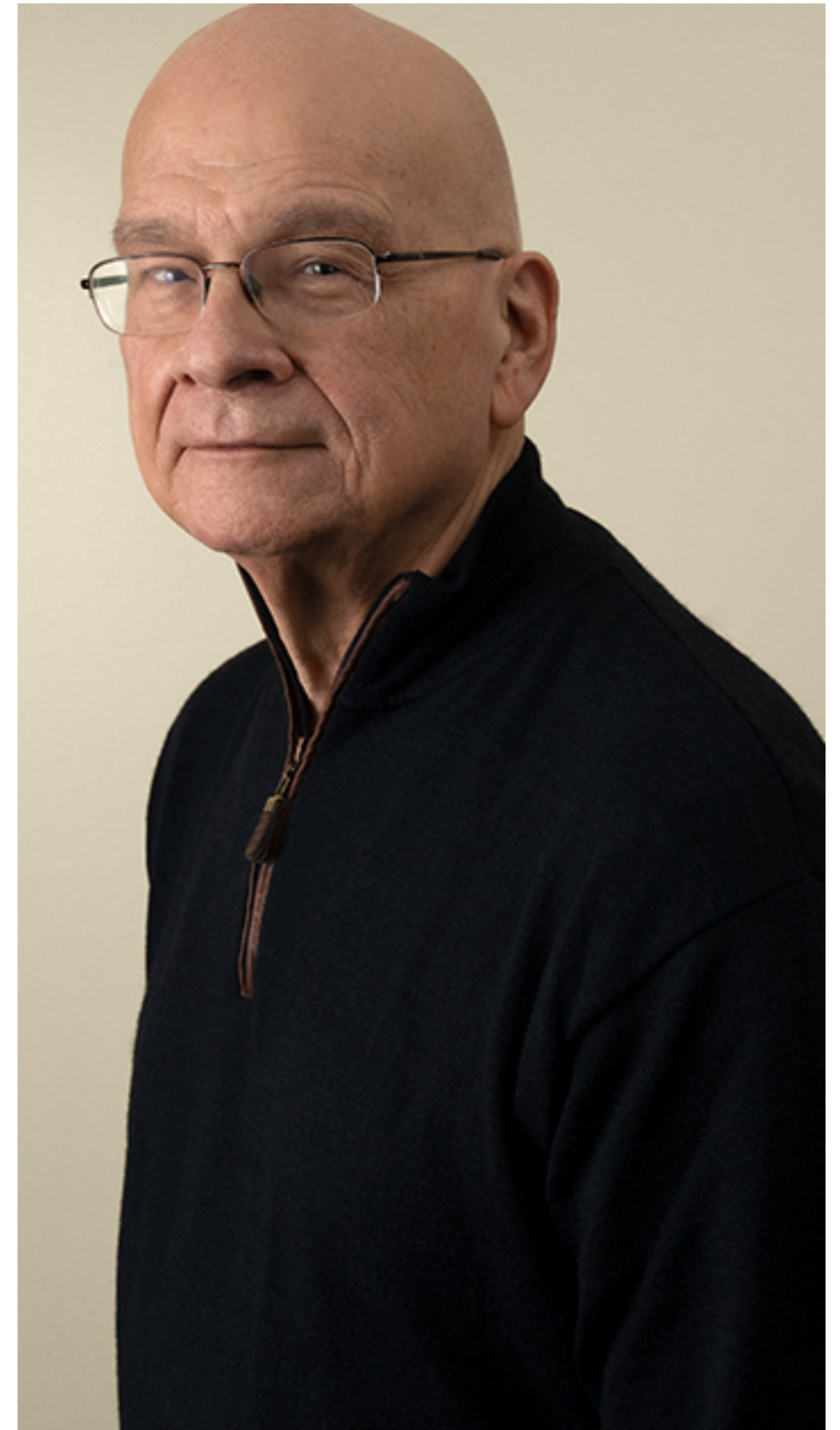
Took two years of chemotherapy then in January 2023 he was a patient of immunotherapy medication research being conducted at the National Institute of Health. Hospitalized for difficulties with the treatment. Taken home and died the next day saying...

"There is no downside to my leaving."

(Leaving, not dying.)

"I can't wait to see the face of Jesus. Send me home."

(Going home, not leaving home.)



Soulcare

Meets Healthcare

- We can worship everyday into our forever.
- Being scared to death of death keeps us scared to death of life.
- Our spiritual health is more important than our physical health.
- The Great Physician doesn't want cash to heal us he only wants our whole heart.
- There's no death for the hidden in Christ.

Here's what to do to live in God's kingdom now:

1. Get on and stay on a spiritual growth path. Set aside time for meditation, prayer, fasting, study, worship. Live a life of simplicity, submission, service, and celebration. My favorite book for this is Richard Foster's *Celebration of Discipline*.
2. Surround yourself with others who do this, too.
3. Stop fretting so much over your body, your face, your hair . . . and get the best facelift from your own smile. Drop ten years (and a few pounds) just by standing up straight.
4. Move to improve.
5. Don't get sick, don't think about getting sick, and don't hang around people who are sick or who like to be sick (unless you are a volunteer in a caregiving situation).
6. Stay social. Add to your circle of friends and your circle of care, and volunteer to be in someone else's circle.
7. Let your heart shine through your eyes.
8. Look for God in everyone and everything.
9. Stand up, throw your shoulders back, glance up to heaven, and put a smile on your face as you start your day thanking your Father that his kingdom is here now in what you are doing together.



The Wall Street Journal published on December 2, 2020, “America has lost one of its greatest economists and public intellectuals. Walter Williams died Wednesday morning after teaching his final class at George Mason University on Tuesday. He was 84.”

Hmmmm. Final class for that semester. His best friend of fifty years, Thomas Sowell, wrote that Dr. Williams wanted to die on a day when he had taught his class. Did he will himself to keep teaching? Did he leave while still flourishing? Yes.



“Humanity must embrace death freely, submit to it with total humility, drink it to the dregs, and so convert it into that mystical death which is the secret of life.”

-C.S. Lewis, *Miracles*

He died of kidney failure in 1963 at home and one week before his 65th birthday.

NOTE: Dialysis was first made available in an out-patient facility in 1962 at The University of Washington.

My dad taught me how live and how to die.

No grumbling only gratitude.

No fear only faith.

No worry only worship.

Thanks, Dad.

When to Review or Update Instructions?

This list is on page 141

- **D**ecline in health
- **D**iagnosis
- **D**ivorce
- **D**eath of loved one
- **D**omicile change
- Every **D**ecade

Advance Care Planning is about
you telling the people
who matter most
in your life
what matters most
in your life.



Can we now all agree?

“Death is a gift from God. It is the means by which we can step from these broken, fallen bodies into his perfect presence.”

-Jim Denison
denisonministries.org



Live fully now, with heart, mind, body, and soul, all the way, every day in heaven on earth as we watch and are ever-ready to see Jesus face to face—to be done with what hurts, to embrace our perfect healing and wholeness.

PS You're on your own to do the last assignment on pages 139-141.

Thank you, Father, for freeing us from any fears we may have had about our health, our own leaving and the leaving of those we love.

Thank you for setting us free to live in your kingdom now and until you call us from the imperfect into our perfection in our forever home with you.

In the name of our risen savior,
Jesus Christ,
we offer this prayer with grateful hearts,
Amen.