

September 15th - Scheduled to Death...Under the Insurance (Pre-existing and Post-operative)

Introduction - What is your "sure thing" in life? Would you bet big money on a sure thing; invest your savings in a sure thing; commit to surgery that the doctor guarantees is a sure thing; claim that the love of your life is a sure thing? We don't have to venture to far back in history to realize that a sure thing is not always a sure thing. Does the name President Hillary Clinton ring a bell? Up into the late evening of election night in 2016, election experts said her becoming the next president was a "sure thing."

We are so unsure about sure things that we spend money to insure ourselves against loss when the unsure happens. The devastation of the tornadoes on Memorial Day night remind us that the unlikely is likely to happen even when we are pretty sure it will not. But it matters not how sure we might be, because what is a sure thing is completely out of our hands. That is why we spend as much of our income as we do on insurance because even though we are ensured to be assured nothing bad will happen, we protect ourselves financially with insurance on the slight chance it will. Dictionary.com says; "Insurance is the act, system, or business of insuring property, life, one's person, etc., against loss or harm arising in specified contingencies, as fire, accident, death, disablement, or the like, in consideration of a payment proportionate to the risk involved." The reason we pay for those health insurance premiums, life insurance premiums, home and auto insurance premiums is not because we hope something bad will happen, but believe that if it does insurance can help us rebuild or recover from our losses.

Is there anything in this life of which we can believe it to be a sure thing? Columbus residents were shocked last week at the arrest of one of their beloved meteorologists. He has been on TV for 30 years forecasting the weather, visiting grade schools and other events with children. He was arrested for having child pornography on his computers and involved in exchanging such pictures with others. I imagine that most of those who knew him, worked with him, or watched did so thinking him to be a sure thing in which to trust, but how unsure do you think those same people might be today? It is not like we have had a local meteorologist lose their job in disgrace for a DUI or anything like that! Adults have come to understand that there is no sure thing in life, especially when it comes to people. Too bad there is no insurance against that!

Well, I am here today to assure you that you can be ensured with one form of insurance available to us. The special thing about this insurance is that you can rest assured ensured by the underwriter. You know I am talking about Jesus who is our insurance to ensure our assurance. He is the only sure thing upon which we can bet our very existence against because He has proven He will not fail us.

We have been talking about entering the rest of God the last two weeks. We talked last week about how God gives us true rest and meaningful rejuvenation when we hear the gospel and obey it in our life. I related that to our church experience which provides for us the opportunity to enter God's rest as we honor the Lord on His Day. We connected the dots between God resting on the seventh day and the fulfillment of that resting on the first day of the week. Go back and listen to the message online or download the manuscript for more details. We have this promised rest God gives to us through grace, but when we do not enter it, which is an act of deliberate sin, because as we will discover today, we think our pre-existing condition disqualifies us from Jesus' insurance policy for us, and we also think his coverage will not extend long enough for our post-operative care, we are putting at risk those we know who will perish if they follow our example.

Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience. For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are - yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (Heb 4:11-16)

The sure thing which Jesus insures for us is the rest of God, and we must make “every effort” to enter it lest we become the cause of others perishing because we are like all those in the Old Testament who perished in the desert, or like those in the New Testament days who didn’t see the value of this rest and neglected entering it. We shouldn’t disqualify ourselves because of pre-existing conditions because we are laid bare before Him to whom we must give an account. We should not doubt the post-operative care that completely rehabilitates us for as long as it takes. No caps, no maximum days, the goal is our complete restoration by the one who knows better than anyone else what we feel and fear in the process! Now, doesn’t that sound exciting! Jesus is our insurance to ensure our assurance. Say that with me; Jesus is our insurance to ensure our assurance.

We are under the insurance policy of Jesus who covers every “pre-existing condition.” The healing we receive through the rest of God we sometimes fail to make every effort to enter. To be clear, the effort we are to make in general is to celebrate God’s rest each Lord’s Day through the encouragement of the word, remembering the Lord’s Supper, gathering our tithes into the storehouse, and lifting our voices in praise of God...*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Col 3:15-17)*

One of the biggest hot button political issues we will hear about over the next year as the 2020 presidential election nears is “healthcare.” There are those who want to institute a “single payer” system in which your taxes will be raised which you will be able to afford because “private insurance” will be no longer needed. And others who want to reform our expensive current system so that everyone can afford to buy coverage if they want it. Both sides seem to be sweetening their offer with the promise that “pre-existing conditions” will be fully covered in one way or the other. A pre-existing condition is an injury, disease, or disability you had before you got coverage that will be covered anyway. So, if I broke my leg in the morning, went and got insurance that afternoon, the insurance company would be obligated to cover the care and repair of this pre-existing condition whether they liked it or not. They would be obligated to pay for all my doctor and hospital bills and then if I wanted, I could drop the insurance after paying a few premiums without penalty. Now, I realize this to be an extreme example, but hopefully you get the picture.

We all have our opinions and political leanings on this matter, but can you imagine if an insurance company called you up and said, we notice you have this pre-existing condition and we want to cover it for you! We have examined all your records from the day you were born and everything is uncovered in those files, but we still will provide insurance coverage for all pre-existing conditions, all you need to do is make every effort to get the care you require. If an insurance company did this, you would think this was too good to be true, and maybe that is why we think it is too good to be true that God knows everything about us, every sin, sorrow, secret, and He offers to pay for the care of it, actually His Son paid the price so that we could be healed and helped with every pre-existing problem we have ever had. All we are required to do is make every effort to get the care and comfort we need through the body of Christ...*For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account... Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience.*

The bible exposes every pre-existing condition of injury, disease, and disability in our hearts and mind and still we are encouraged to make the effort to get into church and live out our purpose in Christ...*work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.* Our pre-existing conditions do not disqualify us from Jesus’ coverage because His coverage is the very reason for those conditions. It is the vile trick of Satan to get Christians to be scheduled to death because he knows the more we miss church, the more likely we will miss out on God’s rest, and set a bad example for those in our family who are perishing. But what if so excited about this insurance, we shared it with all.

Pre-existing conditions we sometimes think disqualify us from Jesus' insurance of rest, but for most believers, and I think this applies to many of us, we doubt that the Post-Operative care available to us will be sufficient or last long enough for us to completely heal. Surgery on Hips, knees, and for heart-attacks call for a lengthy rehab period after the operation. More than you can count, I've listened to the concerns of patients who feared they would be released too quickly, that their post-op therapy will not be sufficient, and they didn't want to go to a "nursing home" but preferred home care. This personal hot button issue is made more serious when people we don't even know, haven't ever met, make decisions about our long-term care. Hospitals hire social workers to aide patients to get through the process of post-op options. These options are dictated by Medicare at times, and private insurance at other times. If the coverage they offer isn't extensive enough, patients might have to "pay out of pocket" for the continuing care they need, some risking financial stability. Doctors and specialists can only do so much before the policies of insurance companies take over. This stress over post-op options can slow down recovery and even cause some to give up.

I hope none of us have to make difficult choices relating to our health-care, but can you imagine a rep from the insurance company stopping by your room in the hospital after surgery and saying; "I have been exactly where you are and know how you feel and what you fear, but don't worry, we will take care of you, get you the help you need, and if you have any concerns, here is my personal number, just give me a call." But that is exactly the kind of insurance Jesus provides for us isn't it: **Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.** Jesus is our insurance to ensure our assurance...let's say that again. Isn't that fantastic to have that kind of coverage from Jesus, and all we have to do is hold firmly to our faith.

Holding firmly to our faith specifically is made much easier when have the encouragement of others...**Since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching. If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. (Heb 10:21-27)**...We can most easily do this when meet regularly together, but when we forsake meeting, we become vulnerable to Satan's schemes which make us feel isolated and alone. That is the problem with being "Scheduled to Death". When we allow Satan through others to fill up our schedules on Sunday mornings or early afternoons, there is more at stake than what we appreciate.

Listen, I am a church goer, have been since I was a baby. Jesus has always been my insurance that ensures my assurance. This assurance empowers me to overcome whatever Satan throws my way. It may look like those who don't go to church are surviving, even enjoying themselves more than we do who are faithful. But there is no sure thing offered by Satan or anyone in this world. Only Jesus is our sure thing, and we must make every effort to enter into His rest, or the disobedience will catch up with us all.

Insurance coverage for adult children who live in the home was extended to those up to 26 years of age. This extended coverage was a concession because young adults are hesitant to accept full responsibility for their own provision. Delayed adult responsibility is getting so bad that a new term has been coined to describe young adults who can't do simple things to care for themselves; "adulthood." It could be argued that this inability to do basic tasks is a by-product of fewer families going to church. Church teaches us personal accountability and responsibility. It teaches us that we have purpose and promise, and as learned today, it is our insurance policy that covers pre-existing conditions and all post-operative care. This is all about God's gift of rest and grace of rejuvenation for those who make every effort to enter it. We can't let the devil continue to "Schedule Us To Death" any longer. As Paul warned; "that is why many among you are weak and sick."

