

Rev. Dr. Yugo Suzuki's sermon

5/23/10 **Do not be Anxious John 14: 8-10, 25-27**

No one in today's world can escape anxiety. We are anxious about school, relationships at work, our family situation, the possibilities of being laid off. The list is unending.

The elderly are no exception. They are anxious about health, the frailty of life, the inevitable death they will have to face.

We are all anxiety-ridden people.

But Jesus says, "Do not be anxious." What does he mean by that?

Jesus does not mean we should be indifferent to what is going on around us. Jesus does not mean we should look away from the world where so much goes wrong and pretend that everything is OK.

What Jesus means is this. As far as God's love and compassion are concerned, you have no worry at all. Do not worry if God cares for you, because he is on your side no matter what.

In the passages read earlier this morning, Philip asks Jesus, "Show us the Father." Obviously Philip was anxious about the sorry state of his nation Israel where the sick and afflicted were treated as subhuman.

Does God care at all? Does he feel people's pain? Jesus, I want to know. This was Phillip's intention when he said to Jesus, "Lord, show us the Father."

Jesus' answer was clear. "Any one who has seen me has seen the Father." Jesus loved the sick, the oppressed, and all the despised people of the land. Jesus healed them, embraced them, and shared a meal with them. God's compassionate nature is made abundantly clear in Jesus. In this sense, anyone who has seen Jesus has seen the Father.

Does God care for us? Yes, indeed. A thousand times yes. Does God love us? No doubt about it.

An unknown poet stands at the seashore and looks back. He sees his footprints in the sand. Actually they are his life history. There is another set of footprints beside his. They belong to Jesus.

But in those years the poet's life was shattered by pain, meaninglessness, and despair, he sees only one set of footprints. So he asks Jesus, "Lord, why did you leave me when I most needed you?"

Jesus answers him, "I have never left you even a moment. A single set of footprints means I was carrying you on my back. Those footprints are mine."

Jesus is our hope. He is our cornerstone. He is the anchor of our life, the anchor that braces us for the living of these stormy days.

Thanks be to God. Amen