

Active and Growing...Reverent Awe!

Hebrews 12:28-29

February 10, 2019

When was the last time you were "AWE'D?"

You were stopped in your journey thru life in a moment where you were speechless...or said something like "Wow! OMG! Awesome! YESSS!" Goosebumps raised up on your skin and your heart skipped a beat. You were AWE'D!!!

Share an "awe'd" moment you have had in your life!

How "awe'd" are you in your life?

How "bored" are you in your life?

How do we get bored in life? We can become so routine or familiar in life that we lose the "awe." Same old same old! Routine overcomes awe!

We can lose the awe with places, things, experiences and even people in our lives. When I get a chance to travel to the mountains I often wonder if the people who live in such majestic beauty lose the awe for the scenery. I wonder if people who have all the things they want in life eventually take their house, food and lifestyle for granted. I wonder if family members begin to take each other for granted instead of daily awe'd by their presence and love?

Awe'd or bored?

Awe-less or Awe'd life?

As Christians, followers of Jesus, which do we think we are called to live?

Awe'd or bored? Awe-less or Awe'd? How active and growing is your awe in Jesus?

There is a danger for many of us who have been followers of Jesus for years to lose the awe.

In fact, it is a professional hazard for pastors.

The danger is that we become so familiar with the story that we lose awe of the Savior!

Listen to that again:

We become so familiar with the story that we lose awe of the Savior!

What happens when we lose our Awe for Jesus?

Losing our awe for God leads us to being in awe of the holy cow! I'm not talking about the Chik-fil-a cow. I'm talking about the holy cow that got the people of God in trouble.

(Exodus 20-35)

Moses came down from Mount Sinai, something over 3000 years ago, with the stone tablets that had the 10 commandments on them. He had them in his arms and the word of God on his lips. After Moses delivered an overview of the commandments and God's will for the people he returned back up the mountain to meet with God.

This time Moses was gone for a long time...40 days and 40 nights. In the mean time, the people grew impatient. They didn't have the passionate patience we talked about last week!

They decided to take things into their own hands. They were frustrated with where they were in the wilderness. They created their own "awe." They asked Aaron, Moses' assistant, to create a new awe for them. Guess what that awe was? A holy cow! Aaron took the gold jewelry of the people and crafted the golden cow!

This provided the people for a new novelty for excitement in their worship. And do you know what happened next? Their golden cow of awe worship, self-defined and self-serving...refusing to wait, defiant of the number one commandment to not worship any other god...nearly destroyed them. God was furious! He was a holy fire ready to wipe out his "bored...awe-less" people.

Before you check this off as a then and not now worry for us; let me share a recent finding regarding Americans losing their awe of God.

In an article in *Psychology Today*, titled, "*3 Reasons Why America is Starting to Lose God*," Dr. Andy Tix listed the three reasons:

1. Rise of self.
2. Negative attitudes.
3. Decline in awe.

Wow! Sounds like, looks like the "holy cow" awe!

Self-seeking and self-serving attitudes.

Negative attitudes towards others and religion.

And a decline in the AWE!

What "holy cow" is "awe" for people today?

From Moses to Revelation, there is the emphasis of the awe of worshipping God only. (Exodus 20:3 & Revelation 22:8-9) God alone is worthy of our worship, adoration and awe! Are there people, ideas, goals, lifestyles or possessions that occupy central place in our lives above God? What "holy cows" are crowding out the awe of God in our daily living?

What have we become so familiar with that we are losing the holy awe of God in our lives?

Praise of God, experiencing His Awe in our daily, benefits us in that it takes our minds off our problems and holy cows and focuses on God's awesome mercy, love and grace.

The focus goes off of us and on to Jesus.

Awe of God, praise of God, gives voice to our desire for God.

David, the psalmist, gives such great guidance for us in seeking the awe of God.

He reminds us that the whole earth is filled with His glory. (Psalm 65:8) Awe in Creation!

We can worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness and there we discover our true i.d. (Psalm 96:9) Awe in Worship!

When we are still we come before the Lord and experience His presence we get to know more of His awesomeness. (Psalm 46:10) Awe in Meditation!

Living in awe of God means we live knowing there is a greater story than ours.

The familiar gives way to the reverent AWE of God.

How can we raise the awe-factor in our lives?

The bible is full of awe-filling promises and directives that will bring us into an awe-filled life:

1. Set your affection on things above, not on earthly things.
Colossians 3:2
2. Pray continually. I Thessalonians 5:17
3. In everything give thanks. I Thessalonians 5:18
4. Hate what is evil, cling to what is good. Romans 12:9
5. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.
Galatians 2:8
6. Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.
I Peter 5:7
7. Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility...
Colossians 3:12
8. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit.
Philippians 2:3
- 9 Let us not become weary in doing good. Galatians 6:9
10. Come near to God and He will come near to you. James 4:8

Are we too familiar with these awe-inspiring promises?

How active are they in our daily?

What about our worship of God? Routine or reverent?

Isaiah, the prophet, had folks who were routine in their worship. God described the people as folks who, **"come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me."** (Isaiah 29:13)

Reverent awe that is active and growing is an awe that moves us to active worship in the daily. Reverent awe leads us to reverent action. Awe-filled worship reaches our hearts.

However, in our fast paced society we often become too rushed, hurried or distracted from the awe of worship. It is easy to rush into our one hour a week worship service without even preparing our hearts for worship. We reflect and worry about what we have to do after worship. We worry about our past week or the demands of the upcoming week. We hear the words but meditating on them is not on our hearts. We don't think about what we sing or affirm. We give the lip service but the application of the awe in the daily falls short.

When was the last time you were "awe'd" by God?

He is an Awesome God!

The lack of awe falls on us and not Him. Have eyes to see and ears to hear of the AWEsomeness of God.

Hear the familiar of faith as if for the first time.

Seek the freshness of the awe of God instead of the staleness of the familiar.

Pray for a strong awareness of the AWE of God in the daily.

Hang around people who are "awe'd" with life and "awe'd" by God!

Affirm the Awe of God!

Our God is an Awesome God!

Join me in affirming the Awe of God with our insert in the bulletin.

