

FFG 6-3-18 “Kidnapped AWE”
(all scriptures are quoted from the NIV)

Thanks to Pastor Scott and the elders for giving me the privilege to teach this morning. **Remember to pray for Pastor Scott as he is hunting in Canada.**

You may have heard about the two men who went bear hunting. One man stayed in the cabin, and the other went out huntin’ a bear. He found a huge bear, shot it, but only wounded it. The bear was madder than a wet hornet and charged toward him. The man dropped his rifle and started running for the cabin as fast as he could. He ran as fast as he could, just as he reached the open cabin door, he tripped and fell flat. The bear tripped over him and went rolling into the cabin.

The man jumped up, yelled to his friend inside, "You skin this one and I'll go get another one!" and slammed the door.

Hopefully, Scott is having a better experience in Canada..

Turn to....**Ps 25 and Gen 6**

This morning, I stand before you with a great deal of humility, brokenness and repentance about the topic God has put on my heart to teach this morning....

As we begin this morning, I want to ask you a question:

What is your greatest concern in life? What is your greatest worry or fear?
Not one of your many concerns, but your #1 fear or concern?

Read Ps 25:4-12 (string)

vs 4-5 speaks to our desire for guidance and learning which ways/paths pleases God

vs 6-7 speaks to our desire for forgiveness and how we must rely on God’s grace and kindness

vs 8-11 celebrates the character of God, by which he guides us into spiritual growth

vs 12-15 describes our confidence in the Lord’s friendship. The person who fears the Lord will have an intimate/personal relationship with God, and live in AWE of him!

There is a powerful three-letter word in the Bible called “AWE”. Awe is the root of awesome and some form of the word AWE is used 53 times in the Bible. So, it must be important....

- It’s not the kind of AWE we use to describe our grandbaby....AWE she’s so cute!
- Not the kind of awe of excitement and elation we experience when you ride the Wild Eagle at Dollywood or when LeBron or Curry hits the game winning shot
- No...

Biblical AWE means to have an overwhelming feeling of reverence, adoration or fear produced by that which is grand, sublime or extremely powerful.

(like creator God)

So, why do you come to church?

Out of social obligation? Because of family pressure? For fellowship with other believers?

We should come to church, not expecting to be entertained or hear an eloquent speaker, but to experience the manifestation of God’s presence.

A.W. Tozer said this, “What good is our busy religion if we’ve lost majesty, reverence, worship-an awareness of the divine?” ~A.W. Tozer

Reverence and AWE of God is what fuels our worship!

We see Biblical AWE in several passages throughout scripture:

In Job 25, dominion and awe belong to God

In Ps 65, the whole earth is filled with awe and your wonders

In Ps 119, My flesh trembles in fear of you; I stand in awe of your laws

In Luke 5, Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God; they were filled with awe.

Read Gen 6:5-6

Herein lies my personal greatest fear.....that God would be grieved because He made me.

Knowing that God regrets or is grieved about something he created, should scare us to death, because, compared to a perfect, holy creator God

- Most of everything that we think or want is wrong
- Our motivations are evil
- What we desire violates God's desire for us
- The boundaries that we set for ourselves violates the boundary that God has established
- Largely, we don't care what pleases God, we care what pleases us
- We don't' care about His Lordship or ownership of our lives,
- About His holiness or His eternal glory.....no,
- All we care about is what we want

In all of my years in pastoral ministry, I can tell you this:

Generally, people love their sin and desire to please self, more than they love God and desire to please Him.

And church, that is a very, very dangerous place to be

There are 1189 chapters in the Bible and three chapters into those 1189, sin enters God's love story. And, because of the fall of man.....

Pastor and author Paul David Tripp said it like this:

"A war wages over who or what will rule and control the awe capacity that God has established in the heart of every human being."

This awe capacity that God created in our heart was intended to drive us towards God, in wonder, reverence and worship!

But, unfortunately, our awe was kidnapped by the enemy in the garden; it was stolen, carried away and abducted by his superior craftiness and now, our capacity for awe gets redirected to things other than God.

And the result is this.....

Our AWE of God is quickly replaced by our AWE of self.

Church, the only thing that has the power to defeat our AWE of self, is living in the AWE of God.

As parents.....

We can't teach what we don't know and we can't give what we don't have.
Living in AWE of God is not only important for us, but for our children and grandchildren as well.

If we are not intentional about teaching our children about living in the AWE of God, we will create another generation of self-worshippers who are inescapably self-destructive.

Read Ps 103:17-18 (bookmark)

As a pastor and Christian counselor for the past eighteen years, I have heard countless stories of good, solid Christian families who raise their kids in church, in youth group, in Christian summer camps, etc. and as soon as they launch their child into the world or into college, they walk away from their faith.

Many of you know that my wife and I have nine children; six biological and three adopted.

- All been raised with faith in God in the church
- All attended youth group and summer camp
- Taught them all about character, integrity, discipline and work-ethic

- Taught to read the word, pray and live in AWE of God

We did all that we know to do.....and still, some of our children are not walking with the Lord today

Prov 22:6 tells us to.... “Train a child in the way he should go, (and which “way” is that?) to live in AWE of God.....and when he is old he will not turn from it.”

~ Prov 22:6

Notice that God doesn't define “old” for us. (IDK about you, but my parents were old when I was young.....they acted old....I'm 55 years young...young kids and a grandbaby....and I feel and act young)

All I know is that the older I get, the older “old” gets for me!

In Prov 22:6, there is clearly a gap between the age of a child and whatever age God considers to be old.

Here's how our kidnapped AWE pertains to our children....

When your child is rebelling against you about:

- cleaning their room, what to wear
- what to eat, who to hang out with
- who to date, which video game to play and what to click on or not

Know that it's not necessarily about you; it's simply because they don't want to ruled or governed by anyone, but neither did Adam and Eve!

Every child lives with two equally seductive lies:

First, is the lie of autonomy that says, I am independent human being and I have the right to do what I want, when I want, exactly the way that I want.

The second lie is the lie of self-sufficiency that says, “I have everything I need and I can do everything myself, I don't need any help.”

Church, Every person on the planet is born with a heart controlled more by the love and adoration of self, rather than a love, adoration and AWE of God.

Here's the good news.....God foreknew that there would be a time and season for young people to search, to question, to investigate in their youth....But, parents, if you have trained them up, stand on the promise of God that when they are older they will come back, they will not turn from it, because you have planted seeds of AWE in their heart.

Some of you know that I am the Director of Foster Care and Mentoring at HH

On any given day, we have 60 children in our residential care program, another 60-70 children in licensed foster homes and up to 12 young adults in our independent living program.

Our children at HH, like your children, have bought into the lie of autonomy and self-sufficiency.

The major difference between our children and your children is

- You love and provide for your children
- You teach your child right from wrong and
- Instill in them character and integrity
- You nurture and invest in your children and
- Provide them safety and security

.....Which profoundly helps them more effectively deal with these two lies

Unfortunately, our kids didn't receive most of what your child received, so our kids are struggling with these two lies on their own

Our hope is to reach them through positive adults, like you, through mentoring and foster parents who will love them unconditionally and pray them into eternity.

God is clear in His Word about His love and concern for widows and orphans. If we as the body of Christ want to live in AWE of God, we simply need to care for the people who are God's burden.

Becoming a foster parent is not for everyone; but is for some who God calls to this mission. Maybe you're not in a season to become a foster parent, but you know someone who is.....

Every person on the planet has the same 168 hours every week. Would you prayerfully consider giving up one of your 168 hours every week to invest in the life of a child in our care as a mentor? There is no special education, training, work experience or talents required, simply a positive adult role model to spend quality time with a child to help usher them into eternity.

More information at your Welcome Center or you can contact me at Holston Home or Bradley at your church.

Worship team

Stand/closing.....Deacons/elders....

Ps 33:8 "Let all the earth fear the Lord, let all the people of the world revere Him."

The greatest reason for us to revere God and live in AWE of Him is b/c of what he has already done to redeem us.

Dr. Charles Stanley was once praying for his kids to revere God and live in AWE of Him. When his son, Andy, was 13, Dr. Stanley developed a bacterial infection that required immediate open heart surgery. Suddenly, there was a role reversal in his home; Andy was now the man of the house, caring for his father. It caused Andy to get real serious, real quick. Dr. Stanley realized that the Lord was using his affliction to give His son a serious heart for the Lord that led to reverence for life, faith and God himself.