



How Do I Renew My Own Wonder, Awe, and Adoration About Christ?



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It's the most wonderful time of year...there'll be parties for hosting, marshmallows for toasting and caroling out in the snow, there'll be scary ghost stories and tales of the glories of the Christmases long, long ago. It's the most wonderful time of year...

Those are some of the lyrics from one of the most iconic songs played during the Holiday season and I would venture to say, for most Americans it describes the wonder of the season for them. As Christians, we know that Christ is the true reason for the season, yet how do we guard against letting the world's portrayal of Christmas sap our wonder, awe, and adoration of the true reason for the season, Jesus Christ?

I want to suggest three truths to ponder that might help you renew your wonder, awe, and adoration for Christ this Christmas season.

Truth #1: His Sacrificial Gift

My favorite verse of the bible is 2 Corinthians 5:21: *"He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."* The reason that's my favorite verse of the bible is every time I contemplate it, I am just awe-struck by the fact that the God of the universe would condescend Himself to such a humbling state for an undeserving sinner like me. Just think about it! The first person of the Holy Trinity (God the Father) would ask of the second person of the Holy Trinity (Jesus) to take unto Himself our sin (i.e. to experience the wrath of God that we deserved) and in exchange we get his righteousness. In bartering terms, that is the score of ALL TIME!

So, when you start to stress over who's getting what or who is giving what, just remember that Christ has given the greatest gift ever! No stocking stuffer, not the latest gadget, not anything can ever compare to what God has freely given us in His Son, Jesus Christ.

Truth #2: His Faithfulness

When we consider what God has done by fulfilling the prophecy He spoke hundreds of years before the birth of Jesus through His prophet Isaiah—that a child would be born to a virgin and that His name would be Immanuel (God with us)—we need to understand that is just part of the story. Yes, God came down to us at Christmas, but He came down to lift us up! But consider how He did it. The second person of the Holy Trinity stepped out of Glory, clothed himself in human flesh (as an infant), despised the shame of those whom he created, and ultimately took God's wrath upon Himself on the cross. What a Savior!

Truth #3: His Eternality

Jesus did not come into existence at His birth. He always was and is the great I AM. John says that, *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and Word was God...And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth"* (John 1:1, 14). And why did He come? So that, *"as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God"* (John 1:12). C.S. Lewis puts it this way in his book, *Mere Christianity*, "The Son of God became man to enable men to become the sons of God."

Christian, this holiday season when family may be far off, and you won't be home for the holidays, don't fret. You are now part of a much bigger family: God's family! And He chose you before the foundation of the earth (*Eph.1:4*)!

It's a marvelous thing to contemplate these truths. In a lot of ways, they are mysteries that we cannot fully wrap our heads around. Yet, we take them by faith. And as we do, our wonder and awe and adoration for Christ grows more and more. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the great theologian, pastor, and martyr once wrote

"What a mistake to think that it is the task of theology to unravel God's mystery, to bring it down to the flat, ordinary human wisdom of experience and reason! It is the task of theology solely to preserve God's wonder as wonder, to understand, to defend, to glorify God's mystery as mystery."

So, as we enter this Advent season and prepare to celebrate our Lord and Savior's birth, let us not lose sight of the wonder and awe surrounding this mysterious exchange He has transacted for us in His coming. He who knew no sin, became sin so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (*2 Cor.5:21*).

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