

## Sermon- AWE TROUBLE

### Psalm 145

#### INTRODUCTION:

How many of you learned a mealtime “blessing” to say when you were a child? What was the first meal time blessing you learned?

Was it this???

Jimmy Stewart in Shenandoah

Lord, we cleared this land, plowed it, sowed it, and harvested it. We cooked the harvest; it wouldn't be here and we wouldn't be eating it if we hadn't done it all ourselves. We worked dog-bone hard for every crumb and morsel but we thank you anyway lord for this food we're about to eat. Amen.

Or

#### God IS GREAT, God IS GOOD, LET US THANK HIM FOR OUR FOOD

That prayer express a simple childlike faith and respect for God. That's the kind of attitude God wants us to have in all of life.

Jesus teaches us to pray with a focus on who God is first and then a dependence on Him for our daily needs.

How do we live today? As functional atheists or as those who see the need for God's sustaining grace in all of life?

I know that I don't always live in light of God's grace and awesome saving works. When I'm defensive or blame shifting I'm living to protect my reputation, not resting in who I am in Christ.

The kids program “Angels Aware” has a song about this – “I TROUBLE” ; everybody's looking out for #1”

**My greatest obstacle to loving God and loving others is loving myself.**

Transition – My guess is that you can identify

How do you know if you have “I Trouble”? How can you tell if this self-love is going on in your heart?

- You often lack joy
- Your love for God lacks passion and obedience is a bother
- You live in fear of man- of what others think of you
- You live in fear of circumstances- often worrying
- You're quick to take offense at what others do or say
- You're defensive and don't accept criticism
- You're quick to criticize and find fault in others
- You get upset with God because things aren't going the way you think they should.

Transition –we're not alone in this struggle and today we have a text that helps us regain that simple daily awe of God.

#### ADDRESS unbelievers

We're going to look at a passage from scripture- from a ancient worship song – a Psalm of praise Ps 145

If you're not a believer then please know that we're glad you're here, and we'll understand if you think this sounds a bit weird. In fact it may sound like the crazy Jesus freak you want to avoid. But before you shut it out let me ask, “What do you sound this way about”?

What has captured your heart? We all live for something and in different ways we are saying this about something.

If your innermost thoughts were automatically printed on a page what would we see that you are worshipping?

#### God's Word - Ps 145

I will extol you, my God and King,  
     and bless your name forever and ever.  
 Every day I will bless you  
     and praise your name forever and ever.  
 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised,  
     and his greatness is unsearchable.  
 One generation shall commend your works to another,  
     and shall declare your mighty acts.

On the glorious splendor of your majesty,  
     and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.  
 They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds,  
     and I will declare your greatness.  
 They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness  
     and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.

The LORD is gracious and merciful,  
     slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.  
 The LORD is good to all,  
     and his mercy is over all that he has made.  
 All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD,  
     and all your saints shall bless you!

They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom  
     and tell of your power,  
 to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds,  
     and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.  
 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,  
     and your dominion endures throughout all generations.

[The LORD is faithful in all his words  
     and kind in all his works.]  
 The LORD upholds all who are falling  
     and raises up all who are bowed down.  
 The eyes of all look to you,  
     and you give them their food in due season.  
 You open your hand;  
     you satisfy the desire of every living thing.

The LORD is righteous in all his ways  
     and kind in all his works.  
 The LORD is near to all who call on him,  
     to all who call on him in truth.  
 He fulfills the desire of those who fear him;  
     he also hears their cry and saves them.

The LORD preserves all who love him,  
     but all the wicked he will destroy.  
 My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD,  
     and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.

(Psalm 145 ESV)

This was written on a “good day” – the Psalmist is on a crest, on a high. This is where we should try to build a nest for our hearts – on the crest.

Paul Tripp asks, “What is the overriding worldview of the Psalmist?”

It is that we live in AWE OF God. By God's design the core motivation of every human being is to be the AWE of God – it should shape our words, thoughts and actions

The idea of this Psalm and all of scripture is that we live all of life in the light of God's Awesome Greatness and Goodness

Note the daily nature of this praise.

This daily praise acts as guardrails for our hearts – Phil 3:1; 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord Always, again I say rejoice.

- How often do we really give time to bless the Lord, or praise God?

The word “praise” = halal – the root for hallelujah – the idea is “to boast, to make a show, even to the point of looking foolish”

That's just not something we're accustomed to doing in church – we may do it at a ball game or on the golf course or at the mall when we find a really good deal, or when we're bragging on our kids, but not in church.

- Is “praise God” a saying when something goes well or is it a posture of your heart? Or are we too educated and sophisticated to ever even say it, lest someone might think we're charismatic or Pentecostal?

This daily expression of praise reflects a heart of faith of one who knows that the LORD- Yahweh- is worthy of praise no matter what the circumstances. It's a heart that knows that God is God, and not us.

What is the opposite of blessing and praising God?

- Complaining; grumbling
- Ignoring God – living as a functional atheist
- Taking God for granted – having an attitude of entitlement – “of course God is good to me, that's his job; he owes me because of my obedience.

**This is written on the crest of spiritual life but it needs to be applied in the pits**

This is an exercise in an exhortation to self to praise God – Yahweh

**The focus of the praise is the GREATNESS of Yahweh.**

**145:11-13** Then there is the greatness of His **kingdom**. His is the **power** and **glory**. His own people tell the rest of mankind the greatness of His deeds and the bright-shining perfections of His rule. The **kingdom** is **everlasting**, enduring **throughout all generations**.

**145:14** The **LORD** is great in His preservation of those who are going **down** under the burdens of life. And He **raises up** those who have buckled under the pressures and problems.

**145:15, 16** Then too, He is great in His provision. All creatures look to Him in dependence and in expectation, and He provides **them their food** as it is needed—a marvelous organizational feat of growth, preparation, and distribution. With no greater effort than opening His **hand**, He feeds His numberless creatures throughout the universe. What a great God He is!

**145:17** He is great in His righteousness and kindness. Nothing He does is wrong or unmerciful. Only in God do these virtues perfectly unite.

**145:18** He is great in His condescension and availability—always **near** those who sincerely seek Him.

**145:19** He is great in His salvation. No one who approaches Him in contrition and faith is ever turned away.

**145:20** He is great in His watch-care over **all who love Him**. He invites them to cast all their cares on Him.

Finally, He is great in His wrath. Eventually, **all the wicked** will be destroyed.

**and the GOODNESS of Yahweh**

**145:9, 10** His goodness extends **to all**, without discrimination, and He is compassionate toward **all His** creatures, without exception.

**All His works** give thanks to Him, though inaudibly. Their very existence demonstrates His wisdom and power. **And His saints** join in blessing Him for His infinite perfections.

We are to commend the Awe of God to the next generation. Our purpose as a church this morning is to commend and pass on this AWE of God to the next generation. It can be lost.

The psalmist realizes that his praise alone is not sufficient so he calls on each generation to transmit to the next the tradition of God's great work in creation and redemptive history. He sees himself in the flow of God's people – he is a link in the chain of worship from one generation to the next.

If we do anything in worship it should be that we communicate and commend the AWE of God – remind ourselves that **God IS GREAT, God IS GOOD, LET US THANK HIM FOR OUR FOOD.**

Why IS THIS IMPORTANT? We're all in the midst of an AWE War. Our struggle is centered around this question,

**"What Awe will command our hearts and shape our lives – God or something else?"**

A HINT...our greatest obstacle to the Awe of God is AWE OF SELF.

EX: parenting is hard b/c your child is a self-sovereign who has too much awe of himself. The child doesn't have an obedience problem, but an awe problem- he/she EX: 2 yr old "do it myself".

- Awe of material things leads to money issues, but it's not a budget problem; it's an awe problem.
- We all – young and old – do stupid, foolish, or sinful things to please others or to gain approval. It's not a Peer pressure problem, or a self-esteem problem – it's an AWE problem.
- We get worried and anxious about things and we try to manipulate circumstances and other people. It's not a "control" problem or a Type A temperament problem, but an Awe problem.
- We get caught up in coveting, envying or lusting after people or things; it's not a fashionista problem or an internet filter problem – it's an AWE problem.

Recently a man in another state told me "I recently looked at some stuff I shouldn't have, and I don't know why." It's not a lust of the flesh problem, but an awe problem

**We have an awe problem when our hearts aren't satisfied with all that God is for us in Christ.** Seeing and being gripped by the grace and humility of God in sending His own Son to die for his enemies should leave us in AWE.

Both God's GREATNESS AND HIS GOODNESS are supremely evidenced IN THE CROSS

God is so great and so holy that Jesus had to die; God is so good and loving that Jesus was glad to die.

Transition- So in light of this what do we do? What does this look like where we live in 2025?

### **YOU – so what? Now what?**

(How does this apply to me, family, relationship at church, school, work, play? How does it apply to youth, college, couples, seniors, empty nesters...)

If you're not a believer, a Christ follower, then maybe your "So What?" is to identify what it is that you are following. What are you in AWE of? What do you praise every day? What occupies your thoughts and orients your goals and desires?

BE HONEST...Is it sustainable? Can it really hold the weight of your heart, your hopes and your dreams? Is its greatness unsearchable? Can it forgive you? Will it die for you or do you have to die for it?

For the vast majority of us who are believers we need to ask, “What are we in AWE of in our real lives, not our Sunday morning lives?”

Examine your hearts in light of Ps 145 and be honest. How?

**APPLY:**

1. Read and pray through Psalm 145 for a week Repent of living in awe of yourself when you see it. If you're like me It is easy to lose focus, but the Psalms help us stay on track.
2. Ask a friend, your spouse, a child or a parent how your Awe Problem shows up in daily life – and listen!

Even if you don't know Jesus, you can do this

If you aren't a believer you can try it out as well. Here's what it might sound like for you:

“God of the Bible, I don't believe in you but I'm seeing that what I'm building my life on is sinking sand. I need to know you as a great and good God. Help me know your grace and compassion so that my life is not swept away. Help me see how you have rescued even your enemies through the work of Jesus. “

Pray that every day for a week and start reading the Psalms or one of the Gospels of the life of Jesus.

Transition- (remember that God didn't give us these songs so that we simply read and apply them individually. His Word is given so that we as His People would live in a certain way as a community. )

**WE** – (a vision of what it looks like if we as a community live this way)

v. 21 summary – the Psalmist is aware of how inadequate his praise is. Only a congregation of all flesh (creatures) could give truly worthy praise to God's greatness

Imagine a group of people who live in AWE of God rather than in Awe of themselves. How great would that be for our marriages? For our families?

How great would that be for Lafayette? Think how that would impact how we spend our time, our talent and our treasure.

- What if “Awe of God” were the reason we do what we do with our thoughts, our time, our talents, and our treasure?
- What if It were the reason for the way we treat our spouse or our kids or the people across the sanctuary or at work on Monday morning?
- What if “Awe of God” were the thing that we go to in order to find our way out of our darkest moments of discouragement and it were the source of our greatest celebrations?
- What if “Awe of God” were the posture of our hearts so that we could say no to sin and say yes to godliness and repent more of our own sin and focus less on the sins of others?

**CONCLUSION**

**HOW DO WE GET THIS AWE REKINDLED IN OUR HEARTS?**

Psalm 130:4 With you there is forgiveness that you may be feared.

The word “feared” is the same as the word in Ps 145 that means “awe”.

Look at the forgiveness of God – look at the cross- look at the loving death of Christ who died for his enemies – that will inspire Awe and reverent Fear

Stott – “The cross is the blazing fire at which the flame of our love is kindled, but we have to get near enough for its sparks to fall on us. “

Get near the cross; get near the love of Christ to rekindle awe in your own heart.

**COME TO THE TABLE**