

# St Martins C3 – January 30th, 2022

## *In Wonder*

### Sermon Notes:

This morning, I want to encourage us to recapture the wonder in the way that we view God. When we look at God do, we treat Him with awe and respect, or have we become so familiar with Him that we ignore Him.

Kids are good at expressing and experiencing wonder. When they discover the world, everything fills them with wonder. But then something happens, they lose the sense of wonder.

This loss of wonder happens in several areas of our life, but it hurts us a lot when it happens in our relationship with God. When we stop marvelling at who God is then we miss out on so much in our relationship with Him and all our life.

It is dangerous if your understanding of God's power is smaller than your difficulties.

*"The church has surrendered her once lofty concept of God and his substituted for it one so low, as to be utterly unworthy of thinking, worshipping men and women." A W Tozer*

### Recapture the Wonder

**Read Isaiah 40:12-14**

God is bigger than you think. Your God is too small. Whatever you think then the God whom the Bible reveals is bigger, He is incomparable. He is grander, He is larger.

## **Read Isaiah 40:25-26**

This picture of the almighty creator is only part of the picture, God not only created all things He sustains them. He is infinitely familiar with this massive universe. And he never overlooks even a single star.

### **Wonder leads to Faith**

So, that leads us to know that God is awesome and amazing. But how does that help us? Does He even care about us?

## **Read Isaiah 40:11; 27-28**

“The wrong inference from God’s transcendence is that he is too great to care; the right one is that He is too great to fail; there is no point at which things get on top of him.” D A Carson

## **Read Isaiah 40:29-31**

When we see God for who He is and trust Him we can come to the place of complete dependence upon Him. Not trusting in ourselves any longer, but fully relying on God.

### **Wonder leads to faith. When wonder and faith meet there must be worship!**

This morning will you begin by reflecting on who He is and give your praise to Him? God is infinite, transcendent, perfect, and yet He is closer than we can imagine. Closer than the air we breathe. Not even separated by flesh and bones. Through Christ, He is closer than any human being could ever be.

## **Questions for Connect Groups:**

*What things gave you wonder as a child?*

*What kind of events cause a child to lose that sense of wonder?*

*What things in the natural world give you that sense of wonder?*

*When you think of God are you filled with astonishment and awe or has He become ordinary to you?*

*Why does God stop being awesome to us?*

*What can we do to increase that sense of wonder?*

*How will being amazed at God change our spiritual practices – the way we read the Bible, the way we pray, the way we worship?*

*Faith comes from our belief in the awesomeness of God and His care for us. How can we then increase our faith?*

*What do you need to believe God for this year? How can the group join together with you to bring these before Almighty God?*

*What can change for you this week as a result of all we have talked about?*

# **Monday Devotion: Unapproachable, Gatherer of Lambs**

***Read: Isaiah 40:9-11; 1 Timothy 6:15-16***

Each day this week we will look at a piece of Isaiah 40 alongside a companion piece of scripture. After a short devotional thought, we will guide some reflection with four brief questions designed to help you reflect on the greatness of God and walk into your day with wonder, faith, and worship.

Once you have read the passage, think on the questions and bring your thoughts to God in prayerful surrender, allowing your consideration of God to draw you into a new perspective on your day's challenges.

Today's reading tells us about the coming King, we know as Jesus. He is a person of great power, but He is also tender and caring, carrying the weak ones close to His heart. Often we emphasize the care of God but we must also see that Jesus is mighty and powerful. When He comes again many will see Him revealed in power. May we see Him as both today.

## **Questions for reflection:**

What did you learn about God today?

How does this encourage or challenge you?

How do these verses lead you to wonder, faith or worship?

What is a word, phrase, or truth you can ponder on today?

## **Tuesday Devotion: To Whom Can You Compare God?**

***Read: Isaiah 40:12-20; Psalm 97:1-7***

Have you ever been tempted to tell God what to do? I have. I have wondered whether God is maybe a bit short-sighted. I have become convinced that in a situation I know what is best, that God should see the world the way I see it. I have thought that maybe God should ask my advice before He chooses to behave in a certain way.

These words give me a reality check. I see that when I think those things, I am showing my foolish pride. Like the creator of idols, I am in danger of making God in my image – making Him one who blesses me and gives me all that I want rather than letting God be who He is.

The truth is that before God we are infinitely small. In our strength, we are unable to come close to Him or offer enough sacrifices to ever appease Him. It is only by His infinite grace and mercy that we are allowed to draw near and count Him not only as our Lord but also as our friend.

### **Questions for reflection:**

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## **Wednesday Devotion: God the Judge**

***Read: Isaiah 40: 21-24; Psalm 50:1-6; Revelation 20:11-12***

I don't know how teddy bears became cuddly toys for children. I think it has something to do with "Teddy" Roosevelt, cute bear cubs and I'm sure Winnie the Pooh has played his part. But, the truth remains, bears are not cuddly animals. They make my top five list for animals I would least like to have approaching my tent at night. Yet, bizarrely, they are synonymous with comfort and good sleep.

I wonder if we have done the same with God. Here is the infinite creator of all things. The one who will judge the world and call people to account. And we treat Him like a teddy bear whose purpose is to make our lives better. Come on!

Don't get me wrong – this same God who will judge the world is the one who holds the lambs close to His heart, but let us not forget how awesome He is. Remember what Mr Beaver said of Alsan? "Safe? Who said anything about safe? 'Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King, I tell you."

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## **Thursday Devotion: How Great Thou Art?**

**Read Isaiah 40:25-26; Romans 1:20; Hebrews 11:3**

God is the creator of all things, and the work of His creation shows His glory. The famous astronomer Galileo Galilei said that God has created two books, the books of His words (the Bible) and the books of His works (creation). Both reveal His glory.

Today, spend some time outside looking at the awesome world He has created and be filled with wonder.

*O Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder  
Consider all the works Thy hand hath made.  
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,  
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.*

*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee;  
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!  
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee:  
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!*

### **Questions for reflection:**

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## **Friday Devotion: The Greatness of Christ**

**Read Isaiah 40:27-31; Colossians 1:15-22**

The danger in our exploration this week is that we are left with the impression that God is so different that He can't help but be distant. The last verses of Isaiah 40 tell us that is not the case – God cares and wants to be personally present with us.

This week I have been reading *What if Jesus was Serious about Prayer* by Skye Jethani. He talks about the difference between two attitudes to prayer: “I ought to” and “I must”. “I ought to pray” comes from a sense of duty and it is what is expected of us. “I must pray” comes either in a desperate situation or from an understanding of God's greatness and desire to know Him.

In the person of Jesus, we have found the greatest impetus for prayer. Jesus is the same as the God of Isaiah 40, awesome and amazing, but also the one who cares. He is our reconciler and sustainer. May we see Him anew and draw closer to Him than ever before.

### **Questions for reflection:**

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