

Has The Wonder Left You? Luke 2:18

It didn't take long for baby Jesus to live up to his name. *"And his name shall be called Wonderful,"* the prophet said. (Isa.9:6) The grubby shepherds were ecstatic and elated after their experiences that led them to the Christ child. They were so definite and animated in the reporting of the events that those who heard were amazed, astonished, and stunned. The text says, *"And all who heard it wondered."*

This was a favorite word of Luke. He used it 12 times in his gospel account:

- When Jesus wowed them with his words
- In his first sermon at Nazareth. (Luke 4:22)
- When Jesus told the sea to settle down. (8:25)
- When Peter came and found the tomb of Jesus empty. (24:12)

So many of the acts of Jesus prompted the people to exclaim the **"greatness of God."** (9:43)

Synonyms for "wonder" are amazement, surprise, astonishment, bewilderment, admiration, awe, and fascination. Its Hebrew usage is too high, too hard, or too separate, distinguished by being different. **Wonder** is not a cheap amusement but something that grabs you strongly and moves you deeply.

WE ARE BORN WITH WONDER.

Yesterday between two bites of toast my granddaughter asked so many questions.

- She wondered what my vitamins were?
- What the honey was

"What's that?" It is so neat to see a child lift up a rock. They stare at the bugs, the worms, the little snails. It's intriguing. They're amazed. It's intriguing.

TESTS SHOW THAT A CHILD'S CREATIVITY DIMINISHES BY **90% BETWEEN THE AGES OF 5 AND 7. When an adult gets to be 40 he has about 2% of the creativity he had when he was five. No wonder Jesus at 12 stumped the scholars.** J. Robert Oppenheimer said there

are children playing in the street who could solve some of my top problems in physics because they have modes of sensory perception that I lost long ago.

WHAT HAS STOLEN WONDER FROM OUR LIVES?

We live in the space age. We've discovered that there is a dry lake on Mars. We've been to the moon. We cloned a sheep. In the churches we major on examination of the text, the explaining of the text, we get very tight with terms and definitions.

IT IS HIGHLY QUESTIONABLE WHETHER SOME WELL-STUDIED CHRISTIANS COULD BE JOLTED BY SOMETHING NEWLY DISCOVERED IN THE BIBLE. MANY BELIEVE THEY HAVE THEIR BOX OF TRUTH ALL WRAPPED UP AND TIED AND THERE'S NOTHING NEW TO BE DISCOVERED. MANY PUT THEIR MINDS IN NEUTRAL WHEN THEY ENTER THE CHURCH SERVICE.

- Bishop William Qualye's statement in 1911 seems even more fitting today. He said, "*We are dweelers in the region of explanation.*"
- Gilbert Keith Chesterton said, "*The world will never starve for want of wonders, but for want of wonder.*"

WONDER IS THE BASIS OF DISCOVERY

Emerson said that wonder is the seed of science. Einstein did write In the World as I See It, ***The fairest thing we can experience is the mysterious. He who knows it not, can no longer wonder, no longer feel amazement, is as good as dead, a snuffed out candle.***

In an issue of Nature Magazine an article reported the transference of light particles from one place to another by disassembling the particles and placing them in another place. Einstein said this would never happen. How astonishing it would be if this should happen to objects like suitcases. All great disciplines begin with wonder. Proverbs 30: 18-19

WONDER IS THE ESSENCE OF PRAISE.

My experience when I first moved to Dallas and walked that first week with Joyce among the skyscrapers of Dallas. They were so tall I thought they

were bending in the wind. When I got my first glimpse of the Grand Canyon I felt instant awe.

Notice as Paul completed his three chapters on the sovereignty of God how he bursts out praise. Romans 11: 33 When was the last time that your thoughts on Theology astonished you so that you broke forth with a doxology? I Tim.3: 16

How do you feel about applause signs? Wonder is that spontaneous movement of our hearts when we hear a great singer hit that high note. It the urge to stand and gesture when the tight end makes a spectacular catch like stretching out and snatching the football with one hand.

WONDER IS VITAL TO FAITH.

Jesus spoke in parables about the kingdom. He taught about the mysteries of the Kingdom. Paul sought to share the mysteries of God. Faith calls upon us to serve the invisible, incomprehensible God and the unknown future. Trust is based on relying on the unseen God to direct, control and supply. Moses faith took off after he saw a bush that burned. Our finiteness hits us when we have an experience like Peter whose net was filled and began to brake. Luke 5: 6-9 The believer who lives without wonder is a slave not a king and the world is a frightening place to him.

AWAKE TO WONDER, THERE IS WONDER ALL AROUND

My truly amazing wife! Her loyal love after all these years, she still enjoys being with me. The faithfulness of members who have attended church for over forty years. The wonders of the universe, "What is man, that you are mindful of him?" The gospel as it continues to change lives.

THERE'S THE WONDER OF SUNSET AT EVENING,

*"THE WONDER AS SUNRISE I SEE;
BUT THE WONDER OF WONDERS
THAT THRILLS MY SOUL
IS THE WONDER THAT GOD LOVES ME.
O THE WONDER OF IT ALL,
THE WONDER OF IT ALL.
JUST TO THINK THAT GOD LOVES ME!
O THE WONDER OF IT ALL, THE WONDER OF IT ALL-
JUST TO THINK THAT GOD LOVES ME!*

*THERE'S THE WONDER OF SPRING-
TIME AND HARVEST,
THE SKY, THE STARS, THE SUN;
BUT THE WONDERS OF WONDERS
THAT THRILLS MY SOUL
IS A WONDER THAT'S ONLY BEGUN*

Yes, tis the season to worship. I would like to have the frame of mind found in that Appalachian Carol.

**I WONDER AS I WANDER OUT UNDER THE SKY,
HOW JESUS, THE SAVIOR, DID COME FOR TO DIE.
FOR POOR, ORNERY SINNERS LIKE YOU AND LIKE I.
I WONDER AS I WANDER OUT UNDER THE SKY.**