

# Stand in Awe of Him

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[0:00] Stand in awe of Him. By dying, He destroyed our death. By rising again, He restored our life.

! When we come to this special time of communion, we're going to visit three sacred sites, if you like, three sacred sites, and stand in awe of Him.

Firstly, we're going to go to the cross. We're going to go to the cross today. Stand in awe as He agonizes before the Father in Gethsemane until His sweat becomes, as it were, drops of blood falling to the ground. We're going to follow Him in horror as He is arrested like a criminal, mutilated by a Roman whip, tortured, mocked, derided with a crown of thorns. We're going to weep for Him as He stumbles and falls under the heavy wooden beam that He is forced to carry all the way to the place of execution, the cross. We can cringe in revulsion as hardened Roman soldiers pound spikes through His hands, driving nails through His feet and roughly drop the beam into place. Listen to Him as He hangs there, praying for His enemies, talking lovingly to His mother and promising salvation to the criminal who repents at His side. We can be still as the sky grows black at noon and we sit through three hours of eerie midday darkness. We can listen to His cry of abandonment.

My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? We can remember that on the cross the Lord Jesus endured the agony of hell for us, for you, for me, our help. Our sin was paid there at the cross.

Remember that on the cross Jesus endured the agony of hell for you and me. And 2 Corinthians 5, 21, it says, God the Father has made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

[3:01] And the cross divides. And the cross divides. It divides. There they crucified Him. And 2 other with Him. On either side 1 and Jesus in the midst. The cross divides. On either side 1 and Jesus in the midst.

As someone has put it. Oh dear friend, be sure you are not on the wrong side of the cross.

Two souls went forth from the cross that day, both dying by Jesus' side. On either side with the Lord between. But apart, how far and wide.

For one went out into endless night. Heaven opened before His eyes. And one went in with the Son of God through the gates of paradise.

Two souls will go from this place today, both children of guilt and sin. But one has said no to the Son of God. The other has let Him in.

[4:18] And bright as the light of love in heaven, redeemed one thy path shall be. But the gloom and the doom of endless night, poor lost one, awake for thee.

The cross divides. Which side of the cross will we stand? Stand in awe of Him. Go to the cross today. Another sacred scene is the tomb. The empty tomb. Go to the empty tomb today.

The women with sorrowful tread make their way to the tomb. In Mark 16, Mark's account it says, And when the Sabbath was passed, Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James and Salome, had brought sweet spices that they might come and anoint Him.

And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. And they saw that the stone was rolled away. And suddenly an angel interrupts and announces, Matthew 28 verse 6, He is not here, for He is risen, as He said.

Come, see the place where He lay. He is alive, raised to life, glory, victory over death and sin.

[5:37] New life has begun. Sure hope and assurance as we come to the empty tomb. We see as our Saviour, Jesus Christ, in 2 Timothy 1 verse 10, it says He has abolished death.

He's cancelled it. He's abolished it. He's destroyed death. And He's brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.

We stand in awe of Him. Three sacred sites, sacred scenes. We go to the cross. We go to the empty tomb.

We stand in awe of Him. And we go to a third place just now, to the table. We go to the table, the table of the Lord. The table of the Lord. And so we come in this act of worship called communion. God longs for communion with you and with me. He longs for it. He calls us to it for a companionship with mankind.

[6:41] It's what He wanted way back in the garden at the beginning. And at this time, His eternal plan, His communion, in this closing chapter of His life of ministry, just hours before the cross, He came and He met with His own, His disciples.

And we remember that sacred scene today. That sacred cost. We relive that memory of their joining together.

Their partaking. And we can join with them in that sacred feast just now. That simple meal. That simple table. It says in Luke 22 that He took bread.

He gave thanks. He break it. He gave it unto them saying, This is my body which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after the supper saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood which is shed for you.

But behold, the hand of Him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. The hand of Judas was there at the table of the Lord.

[7:55] And we remember at the table of the Lord what happened at the hill of Calvary. As the evangelist Moody said, The thief had nails through both hands so he could not work.

And the nails through each foot so that he could not run errands for the Lord. He could not lift a hand or a foot towards his salvation. And yet Christ offered him the gift of God.

And he took it. Christ threw him a passport and took him into paradise. Think of that at the cross. What happened as our Lord loved that thief by his side.

And the thief could do nothing to be saved. He couldn't move a hand or a foot. He could do no work. Yet Christ had done everything that had to be done.

The Lord Jesus simply asked you to come to him. Unto him. Let's go to him. Receive of him. Receive of our Lord.

[8:55] He came to pay a debt that he didn't owe. Because we owed a debt we could not pay. And as we go to the table we see this sacred scene.

Not that there's something spooky or magical about these physical symbols that we use but of what their meaning is. They're stark reminders.

Graphic symbols of what our Lord has done. And the table declares God's love. God's grace. His welcome.

His reception. Whosoever will. So all who will believe you can come. It says Jesus drank the cup without mercy. The cup of wrath without mercy.

So that we can drink the cup of mercy without wrath. Now think of that. Jesus says in the garden that it was a bitter cup and he drank it.

[9:56] He drank it as it were. In other words he received God's anger against our sin. that we can have God's mercy in him.

And so we proclaim our faith in Christ's death. We proclaim to the world his promise the promise of his returning. And this table is for the body of believers.

The promise is to you to me as we gather together we mark this sacred moment this sacred scene as we remember the heavy burden of our guilt and shame our sin it's been taken off your shoulders.

Your guilt your shame your sin it's been taken off your shoulders and placed on his shoulders his broad shoulders. And we know the Bible says that he bore our sins in his own body on that tree.

That enormous sin debt we could never pay. it was paid in full. It is finished was his cry.

[11:09] And it is finished has this meaning of paid in full. That's the sense of that word. Paid in full. He stamped it in crimson red on that debt knows that is our sin.

And he is alive again from the dead risen ascended and he lives through us by faith. I trust you'll be encouraged today as I call the ushers now.

Let's go.