



Links Players

Christmas 2024 | Star of Wonder, Star of Night

Now, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod, the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." (Matthew 2: 1-2, ESV)

What causes men and women to travel across land and sea to watch the best players in the world? Why go to all the trouble to board a plane in Los Angeles or London, fly to Raleigh Durham, and drive down Highway 1 to Pinehurst?

At one level, the answer is easy—we love the game of golf, marvel at abilities we wish we had, and desire to see the best players in the world go head-to-head for a coveted Major.

But underneath all these motivations, we are creatures searching for "Awe." We are, wittingly or unwittingly, desperate for the "Wow factor." We want to experience something of transcendent significance that lights us up.

We suspect that underneath the humdrum of life—those ordinary moments that dictate much of our lives—extraordinary moments exist, causing us to break out of our bored and drab existence.

All of us have experienced what scholars describe as "transcendent moments." It might be a typical sunrise for others. For you, however, something mystical broke through. It made you aware that, even if for a brief second, you were not alone.

Sadly, many refuse to recognize these signals for what they are—the Transcendent God beckoning them to draw near and bow in "awe" before their Creator.

These magical moments, which arrive unexpectedly, depart instantly, and leave us hungry for more, are emissaries sent from heaven to call us out of our self-inflicted blindness. (Psalm 8; Romans 1:24-28; Acts 14:8-18; Acts 17:22-28).

What we taste when watching golf's best players achieve unprecedented heights, as great as those moments can be, are only signs pointing us toward Someone who longs to open our eyes to his dazzling splendor.

Albert Einstein once observed, "He who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe is as good as dead; his eyes are closed."

When we stand in rapt wonder of beauty, goodness, or human achievement, we

cannot stop there. Let those moments take us to the source—the Transcendent, Triune God. There, and only there, is lasting "Awe" found.

When we satisfy our desire for "Awe" by adoring the Son of David, born two millennia ago, now risen, and enthroned, all other exhilarating moments that lift the human spirit find their subordinate place in the hierarchy of amazements.

When the Three Wise Men saw the Star, they were overwhelmed with "Awe." Refusing to be satisfied with this "star of wonder," they made the long journey across "land and sea" to see what it signified—God had become man in the Christ child. They bowed in wonder and worship!

Like the Three Wise Men, we are created to encounter, commune with, and bow in awe of the living God, life's ultimate object of "awe!"

Five hundred years ago, one Christian scholar referred to Creation as the "theater of God's glory." Question: Are you misreading the signs?

Prayer: Jesus teach us that many, if not most, mountain top experiences are signposts to a deeper reality.

READING: Psalm 8; Romans 1:24-28; Acts 14:8-18; Acts 17:22-28.

1. Perhaps you have experienced something "otherworldly" on a golf course. Maybe an early morning nine sweeping the dew caused you to feel momentarily that you were not alone. Discuss!

2. After reading the recommended texts, what can we learn about God's revelatory activity in and through creation?

3. Application: If you, like millions of others, are lost in the fog of cultural blindness to the wonder of creation, discuss new routines that will open your eyes to the wonder of it all.
