

1. When you lose your awe...
 - a. Eventually things that used to amaze us become old hat
 - i. True in life (sights, sounds, smells, love, exp., etc)
 - ii. Artists talk of losing their muse, needing to find inspiration
 - iii. First time seeing Niagara falls vs. the 50th time as a tour guide
 - b. True of spiritual world too
 - i. First time we hear about Jesus and it strikes us
 - ii. Me in Czech Republic, when I wept every night
 - c. If you are honest w/ yourself, you have probably lost some of your sense of awe about God.
 - i. We know this happens to us when our hearts feel dead and dry
 - ii. Nothing excites us. No joy. No wonder. Just **spiritual rigamortis**
 - iii. What a dangerous place to be...
 1. As ministers (which we all are), as people b/c the awe of God shapes everything we do from our words to our money
 2. Dangerous b/c the awe goes somewhere → to ourselves
 - d. Today my goal is to remind myself (yes myself) and you of that awe
2. *[1] In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. [2] Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. [3] And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!"*
 - a. King Uzziah died, marking the end of a lengthy era of national prosperity → a time for mourning and sadness or for worship?
 - b. God is sitting on the throne, reigning, in all his magnificence regardless of whether there are good or bad times, plentiful or meager times
 - i. Uzziah is dead & Isaiah sees the king who never dies
 - c. But what is interesting and insightful is how Uzziah died
 - i. In his final years, Uzziah had contracted leprosy for being flippant w/ God's holiness → burned incense in place of the priest (explain)
 - d. Uzziah, blessed beyond belief, began to take God for granted
 - i. **He lost his awe of God** → forgot just how holy God is
 - e. I think we can all relate to what that is like, to lose our awe. To have God become old-hat & common...
 - i. The familiarity w/ the kings of God begin to have you lose your awe
 1. Scriptures aren't interesting, study has wearied your mind
 2. Beauty of words and sounds become routine in your brain
 3. The weeping over your sin is replaced by conversations over the exact definition of what is vs. isn't "technically" sinful
 - ii. The problem is that the awe of God is our calling (worship) and it should shape everything that we do.
 1. What we do w/ our thoughts, our desires, our money
 2. The way we treat our spouse, kids, neighbors

3. Reason you work hard at your job
 4. Where you find your identity, motivation, etc
 5. It should lift us out of discouragement, motivate us to worship
 - iii. When we lose our awe of God, we replace it with awe of ourselves.
 1. The train of his robe fills the temple...
 2. Star Jones & Mariah Carey, long trains, were mocked...
 3. We can't think God is important and we are (last week)
 - f. On the contrast...God is hugely amazingly, awe-inspiringly glorious
 - i. He is high and lifted up → Gothic churches
 - ii. Surrounded by seraphim - Little cute babies, right? Try angels on fire.
 - iii. They chant all day long, "Holy Holy Holy"
 - iv. Holy = separate, in a class by yourself
 1. "A cut above the rest"
 2. Three times = uniquely holy, no competition...period
 3. He is "set apart" from the world over which he rules. (positionally)
 4. His very own character sets the standard (morally)
 - a. Just and true are YOUR ways...b/c they are yours
 - v. LORD of hosts → Lord who commands armies of angelic, fiery beings
 - vi. Whole earth full → Every where you look
 - vii. God is uniquely holy, without equal.
 - viii. **God is awe-inspiring. He is awesome.**
3. *[4] And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. [5] And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"*
- a. The thresholds shake..and that's not even God talking
 - b. In the presence of a holy God, Isaiah realizes something profound:
 - c. **God is holy, but we are not.**
 - d. Isaiah's not holy. His neighbors aren't holy. Nobody he knows is holy
 - i. He literally says, "Too bad for me. I'm destroyed." As in completed, "Well, I'm dead meat. I should just stop talking right now."
 - e. When we come face to face w/ the holiness of God there is one consistent theme throughout scripture → a righteous dread and awareness of sin
 - i. People and angels... and they aren't even holy to the capacity of God
 - ii. Touching the ark of covenant
 - iii. Strange fire and the tabernacle
 - iv. Peter in the boat after catching fish w/ Jesus → depart from me a sinner
 - f. If you think you met w/ God and aren't more aware of his holiness, standing in awe...then you didn't see God
 - i. God's holiness should strike us with an earth-shattering sense of awe
 - ii. Adam & Eve hiding, naked and ashamed
 - g. **An awe of God reveals who we are.**
 - i. Our sin, our purpose, our smallness, our hearts...

4. [6] *Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. [7] And he touched my mouth and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for."*
- a. We can't handle God's holiness, his awesome presence, but standing in awe of him is our calling and our responsibility
 - b. So God made it possible for Isaiah to fulfill that calling
 - c. I want to show you what happened here...
 - i. Isaiah didn't do anything
 - ii. God removes his guilt and atones for his sin → literally covers it
 - d. Atone / Cover → God has always responded to sin by covering it, dealing w/ it
 - i. Adam & Eve in the Garden, slaughtering an animal to cover their shame
 - ii. Sacrificial system, slaughtering an animal to cover their sin
 - iii. Yom Kippur (the day of covering or atonement), covering the sins of the community and then blaming them on the scapegoat
 - iv. On the Cross, the awe-inspiring righteous one was killed.
 1. His righteous deeds exchanged for our unrighteous deeds
 2. The awesome one was executed, blood spilled, covering our list
 3. So all God sees when he looks at your life is the blood of Jesus
 - e. Have you ever tried to get blood stains out?
 - i. When God covers something, atones for it, it is dealt with → this is why the angel said to Isaiah "your guilt is taken away"
 1. God dealt with it. It's done. "It is finished."
 - f. **We are not holy, but God offers holiness to us.**
 - i. Why? **So we can stand in the awesome presence of an awe-inspiring God and worship him.**
5. Conclusion
- a. The truth of God and who He is always demands a response. What is the proper way to respond to God? **Awe.**
 - b. Where is your awe currently?
 - i. If your awe is in your position & power, you will protect it
 - ii. If your awe is in being theologically right, then you will be a theological gate-keeper who cares more about nuance than people
 - iii. if your awe is in your idol, then you will protect it, fearing its destruction
 - iv. If your awe is in your job/success, then you will be driven to that...
 - v. As a pastor, if I lose the awe, I will just crank out messages and go through the motions → no power, no love, no overflow
 1. Things will become all about methods rather than God
 2. I know when I lose my awe...I know the signs...Do you?
 - vi. As people called to minister...
 1. If you aren't standing in awe, you can't lead your family into awe
 2. If you aren't standing in awe, you won't lead your friends to awe
 3. If you aren't standing in awe, you are missing God's calling
 - c. How do you get it back?

- i. Stand in the presence of God like Isaiah which always leads to humility
 - 1. Who God is, who you are
- ii. I can't give you specifically a strategy to guarantee that will happen...
- iii. If you are here realizing that you have lost (or never had) your awe of God, listen to the words of Dr. Paul Tripp:
- iv. *"My counsel is to run now, run quickly, to your Father of awesome glory.*
- v. *Confess the offense of your boredom.*
- vi. *Plead for eyes that are open to the 360-degree, 24/7 display of glory to which you have been blind.*
- vii. *Determine to spend a certain portion of every day in meditating on his glory.*
- viii. *Cry out for the help of others.*
- ix. *And remind yourself to be thankful for Jesus, who offers you his grace even at those moments when that grace isn't nearly as valuable to you as it should be"*
- d. Let us pray that we would regain the awe of God in our lives and in this church so that we may introduce it to the world around us.