

Dear Friends,

I wonder when the last time was you experienced something so beautiful or overwhelming that you couldn't help but say 'wow!' or let out a gasp as a response? Sometimes, maybe often, it's in relation to a new sight, experience or situation. It is something which has left its mark on us for all the right reasons, and which leaves us being aware that we have witnessed something which has made a positive impact on our lives.

By the time you read this, it will have been a couple of weeks since I visited Colchester Zoo with family. It was a great day and one where throughout the entire time we were there we heard lots of positive exclamations. Some were in relation to the 'cuteness' of certain animals, or the recognition of the size of some of the animals in real life as opposed to pictures. There was no doubt that a lasting impression had been made on many people.

This is a tangible sense of awe and wonder. It can come through new experiences or through looking at landscapes which take our breath away. As I reflected on this, I was drawn to a song in Singing the Faith called 'Jesus, lead us to the Father, by your Spirit.' The second verse talks of drawing near to God in awe and gladness. It is in these sorts of situations, where we experience something new and truly wonderful, that we see the imagination and creativity of God, the Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer of the world at work. It's difficult not to be thankful and to recognise God's presence in the world.

At the same time, are we attentive to the things which are more familiar, but which can still act as moments of awe and wonder? Or are we too busy to notice them because they're not different enough? God's presence is all around us, in the things we see, the people with whom we interact and in the whole of life. To see the wonder of God in everyday life is to recognise once again that we stand on holy ground. Jesus' presence is everywhere through the Holy Spirit and as we look around us there is always something to see that can inspire a sense of awe and wonder and help us to draw near to God.

Looking out of the window can be a moment to behold the different shades of green there are on the leaves, the varying colours of the flowers, the shapes of the clouds in the sky, or the celebration of technology in the cars, bicycles, scooters, buses and other vehicles that go past the end of the drive. These are all expressions of the gifts of creativity and imagination that are God-given. As we go through the next few days and weeks, why not consider where you are drawn to God in awe and wonder in the familiar parts of life as well as in the new and breathtaking experiences? Why not then give thanks to God for the presence of Christ through the Holy Spirit in the whole of life?

God bless,  
Chris