



Matthew 27:45-54

“Filled with Awe”

Pastor Patrick Bowler

4-23-2023

Consult the Scriptures:

Matthew 27:45-54

(See also: Eph. 1:19-20; Mk. 4:35-41; Matt. 6:25-34; Lk. 12:4-5;
Ex. 20:19-21; Ecc. 12:13-14)

Consult the Scholars:

Matt Smethurst—

“If God were only good, I would go to bed frightened. How could I worship someone who, bless his heart, means well and is doing his best? But I would also go to bed frightened if he were only sovereign. What assurance is there in knowing he’s mighty if he’s not merciful?” (Matt Smethurst, The Gospel Coalition: Secret to Living in a Scary World, Jan. 29, 2019)¹

R. C. Sproul (re: Mk. 4:35-41)—

“Why would the disciples invent a God whose holiness was more terrifying than the forces of nature that provoked them to invent a god in the first place? We can understand it if people invented an unholy god, a god who brought only comfort. But why a god more scary than the earthquake, flood, or disease? It is one thing to fall victim to the flood or to fall prey to cancer; it is another thing to fall into the hands of a living God.” (R. C. Sproul, *The Holiness of God* [Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. 199]), p. 53.)

¹ <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/secret-living-well-scary-world/>

(Jerry Bridges)

three key ingredients to the fear of the LORD:

- (1) A correct understanding of who God truly is.
- (2) A pervasive awareness of His presence.
- (3) A constant acknowledgement of our obligation to Him.²

Discuss:

1. What is the greatest demonstration of *POWER* that you have ever experienced (e.g., earthquake, storm, explosion, etc.)?
2. Read Matthew 27:45-54 and discuss. What demonstration of *POWER* are present in this text? In other words, what happened the moment when Jesus breathed His last?
3. Matthew 27:54 states that the Roman soldiers were “filled with awe” at what they witnessed. What is “awe?”³ Describe a time when you were filled with “awe.”
4. What comes to mind when you hear “the fear of the LORD?” What has been your understanding of it and how was it affected (if at all) by this sermon?
5. Pastor Patrick contrasted the fear of the LORD with another fear (e.g. anxiety, worry, fear of man, etc.); what is the difference between the two?
6. Read Mark 4:35-41 and discuss. What strikes you about this story? What is the difference between the disciples’ fear at the beginning of the story and the end?
7. See the above “ingredients to the fear of the LORD” and discuss (see also the Bridges quote following). How might the fear of the LORD affect our worship, our conduct, and our understanding of the gospel and mission?
8. What challenged you most from the sermon Sunday? What questions do you still have?

² Jerry Bridges, *The Practice of Godliness* [Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2008], p.13.

³ Definition: *Awe*: “a feeling of reverential respect mixed with fear and wonder.”