



## **I want.**

*1Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" 2And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" 4But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

—Genesis 3:1-5 (ESV)

**The struggle for every person- how to avoid making ourself or some other being or thing our god instead of the Lord God.**

*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*

—Hebrews 13:8 (NLT)

**Jesus:** *24Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. 25Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock.*

—Matthew 7:24-25 (NLT)

*You must not have any other god but me.*

—Exodus 20:3 (NLT)

**If I don't live God's ways, then I'm starting to demonstrate that the Lord God *isn't* my god - there's something or someone else in my life that I trust more, that I believe knows best for me.**

*A man will worship something—have no doubts about that.... Therefore it behooves us to be careful what we worship, for what we are worshiping, we are becoming.*

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

*3Our God is in heaven doing whatever he wants to do.  
4Their gods are metal and wood, handmade in a  
basement shop: 5Carved mouths that can't talk, painted  
eyes that can't see, 6Tin ears that can't hear, molded  
noses that can't smell, 7Hands that can't grasp, feet that  
can't walk or run, throats that never utter a sound.  
8Those who make them have become just like them, have  
become just like the gods they trust.*

—Psalms 115:3-8 (Message)

**There is an exception to this insight.**

*This peculiar idol breaks the rules and defies the data.  
When you bow before it, you don't become like it at all.  
You become less and less like it until you are horribly not  
like it. Unlike all the other gods who make you more like  
them as you bow, the more you worship your self, the less  
you become your self. You become a shadow, a specter,  
an unself.... This is the strange paradox of self-worship.*

—Thaddeus Williams

**We were created in God's image, but we were never  
created to be God.**

*The more we get what we now call 'ourselves' out of the  
way and let Him take us over, the more truly ourselves we  
become.*

—C.S. Lewis

**The more focused we are on ourselves, the less awe we will  
experience and the less ourselves we become.**

*The more you revere something more awesome than  
yourself, the more alive you become. The more you revere  
yourself as the most awesome being in existence, the  
more awful your life becomes.*

—Thaddeus Williams

**We were created and function best in a state of awe.**

**When we focus on God, our eyes are lifted up to see the**

**majesty and glory of Him, His Creation, and all He's done for us through Jesus Christ.**

*It seems the more we desire happiness, pursue it, and consume products we hope will help us to achieve it, the **less** happy and **more** depressed we become.*

*—Kevin Corcoran, in his research on happiness*

*Human history is the long terrible story of man trying to find something other than God which will make him happy.*

*—C.S. Lewis*

**The more we seek after happiness, the more miserable we tend to become.**

***Jesus:** Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it.*

*—Luke 17:33 (ESV)*

**Over a hundred times in the Old Testament we're told to express awe or reverence to God.**

*The modern scientist "has scaled the mountain of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries."*

*—Robert Jastrow (God and the Astronomers)*

*42All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer. 43A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. 44And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. 45They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. 46They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity—47all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each*

*day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.*

—Acts 2:42-47 (NLT)

**Faith and Science both show us that the more awe we experience, the more joyously human we become.**

**When we express awe, we're acknowledging there's Someone out there bigger than us, that life isn't first and foremost about me but about the One who created me.**

*1O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. 2Out of the mouth of babies and infants, you have established strength because of your foes, to still the enemy and the avenger. 3When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, 4what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? 5Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. 6You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet, 7all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, 8the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas. 9O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!*

—Psalms 8:1-9 (ESV)

**We were created for worship as a time when the family of faith comes together to worship our God, to stand in awe and wonder that this God who created all there is, sees me, knows me, loves me, and, in fact, loves me so much that He gave His only Son to die for me, that I could be forgiven and once again made right in His eyes.**

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**📖 Next Week:** *Follow Your Heart*

*Don't Follow Your Heart* by Thaddeus J. Williams

Available on [Amazon](#) and [Christianbook.com](#)

## Activities

Do three or four of these this week to sharpen your skills at putting God first. These are taken from the book *Don't Follow Your Heart* by Thaddeus J. Williams, pp. 15-17.

1. Get out in God's creation. Stop to observe and soak in the creative genius manifest around you. Thank Him for it.
2. Sing a hymn. Old hymns like "How Great Thou Art," "Fairest Lord Jesus," "Holy, Holy, Holy," "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing," and "Be Thou My Vision" break us out of self-centeredness and recalibrate our emotions to be awestruck at the size and splendor of God. Make a playlist and let these old God-centered songs be the soundtrack of your day.
3. Turn off your devices, eliminate distractions, and slowly read through Isaiah 46. As you read, thank God for aspect of His awesomeness you see revealed in the text.
4. Attend a gathering of people who worship God. Join in the songs, no matter your skill for (or lack thereof). Don't sing with a self-centered expectation of receiving a spiritual buzz, but purely to melodically declare truth about God to God in unison with others. As C.S. Lewis said, "The perfect church service would be one we were almost unaware of. Our attention would have been on God."
5. Set aside five minutes to pray through twelve divine attributes: God is true to His promises, self-existent, sovereign, unbound by space and time, infinitely satisfying, the source of beauty, full of grace and mercy, all-knowing and incomprehensible, all-loving and triune, changelessly perfect, holy, and awesome in every way our souls long to be awestruck. Don't pray about yourself and your needs at all for this particular prayer. Instead, simply thank God for being who He is. Ask Him to help you be increasingly awestruck by His manifold glories.