

**Kenmore Baptist Church Message Outline
21 August 2016 (Barb Peck and Ryan Vallee)**

For the Life of the World 6 – The Economy of Wonder

BEHOLD

Beauty and wonder lead us beyond man-made control, beyond human imagination, to an infinitely creative God.

This is what God the LORD says—
the Creator of the heavens, who stretches them out,
who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it,
who gives breath to its people,
and life to those who walk on it... (Isaiah 42:5)

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good (Genesis 1:31)

Many, LORD my God,
are the wonders you have done,
the things you planned for us.
None can compare with you;
were I to speak and tell of your deeds,
they would be too many to declare. (Psalm 40)

The Gospel itself is a story of beauty and wonder, where we see God showing his most generous, extravagant love poured out upon an undeserving world.

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfilment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ. (Ephesians 1:7-9)

Since you are precious and honoured in my sight, and because I love you, I will give people in exchange for you. (Isaiah 43:4)

BE STILL

What does wonder require? What happens to our heart, mind and body when we wonder?

But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed. (Luke 5:16)

I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. (Joel 2:28)

You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.
(Jeremiah 29:13)

Worship is never passive.

This only do I seek – that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple
(Psalm 27:4)

IMAGINE

Wonder helps us develop a palate for what is good.

Taste and see that the LORD is good.
Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in him! (Psalm 34:8)

What does the good news of Jesus really mean for the world?

- 1) Imagination is exciting but not safe
- 2) Imagination invites us into true worship in everyday life
- 3) Imagination allows us to creatively enter the Story of God

“In our busy culture, driven by usefulness, do we rest in the finished work of Jesus? Do we taste and the sweet fruit of our bond in Christ, or are we still too busy trying to prove our worth in the world?” (For the Life of The World)

Can we dare to imagine what it look like when we share the exhilarating sense of our wonder at God’s movements in our world with those outside the church?

“The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and all science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed.”

–Albert Einstein

“Knowledge and learning alone lead to manipulation and control—wonder and knowledge and learning lead to the possibility of faith and love”

- Huebner, D. E.

How blessed is God! And what a blessing he is! He’s the Father of our Master, Jesus Christ, and takes us to the high places of blessing in him. Long before he laid down earth’s foundations, he had us in mind, had settled on us as the focus of his love, to be made whole and holy by his love. Long, long ago he decided to adopt us into his family through Jesus Christ. (What pleasure he took in planning this!) He wanted us to enter into the celebration of his lavish gift-giving by the hand of his beloved Son. (Ephesians 1:3-6 (MSG))

EXHALE

We breathe in, and breathe out.

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. (Acts 1:8)

Oh God We breathe in your grace
We breathe in your grace
And exhale
Oh God we do not exist for us
But to share Your grace and love
And exhale

(Lyrics by Plumb)