



*Selah is a welcoming community that **pauses**, **encounters** the Spirit through contemplative practices, and **grows together** toward wholeness and loving others.*
 May 5, 2023

WONDER
Death and Dying That Evokes Awe



“Standing closer to the reality of death awakens my awe at the gift of life.”

Parker Palmer

<https://onbeing.org/blog/on-the-brink-of-everything-an-early-morning-meditation/>

Awe is “the feeling of being in the presence of something vast that transcends your understanding of the world.” Dacher Keltner, *Awe: The New Science of Everyday Wonder and How It Can Transform Your Life*

- Moral Beauty*
- Collective effervescence
- Wild Awe - Nature
- Musical Awe
- Sacred Geometrics - Visual Design
- The Fundamental It - Spiritual Experiences
- **Life and Death - Beginnings/Endings**
- Epiphany*

“To have death present before one’s eyes every day.” (RB 4:47)

1. Life is fragile
2. Knowledge of death changes perspective and how we live
3. Mysteriously heightens and intensifies joy

<https://tracyrittmueller.com/2020/10/15/3-things-nuns-monks-and-poets-know-about-why-you-should-keep-death-daily-before-your-eyes/>

<https://thequestforgoodlife.wordpress.com/2023/02/05/in-awe-of-death/>

"I felt small. Quiet. Humble. Pure. The boundaries that separated me from the outside world faded. I felt surrounded by something vast and warm. My mind was open, curious, aware, wondering."

Dacher Keltner about his brother, Rolf, who died of cancer

Come, Sweet Death by Bach

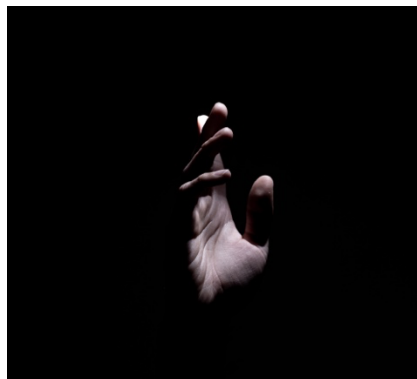
5 Cellos with Sheku Kanneh-Mason, <https://youtu.be/koFTQvGmNfU>

Come, sweet death, come, blessed rest!
Come lead me to peace for I am weary of the world, O come!
I wait for you, come soon and lead me, close my eyes.
Come, blessed rest! Come, sweet death, come blessed rest!
It is better in heaven, For there is all pleasure greater,
Therefore I am at all times prepared to say " Farewell,"
I close my eyes. Come, blessed rest!
Come, sweet death, come blessed rest!
O world, you torture chamber, oh!
Stay with your lamentations in this world of sorrow,
It is heaven that I desire, death shall bring me there.
Come, blessed rest! Come, sweet death, come blessed rest!
Oh, that I were but already there among the hosts of angels,
Out of this black world into the Blue, starry firmament, up to heaven.
O blessed rest! Come, sweet death, come blessed rest!
I will now see Jesus and stand among the angels.
It is henceforth completed, so, world,
Good night, my eyes are already closed. Come, blessed rest.

Question: Through the lens of awe/wonder and death/dying, where is God for you?

Breakout Groups

The "Selah Way" - Turn to wonder, speak only if you want, pause, deep & generous listening



*To wrestle with, and for, the light, for some meaning in life,
is always a way of being in the presence of God.*

Ted Loder, *Wrestling the Light*