

## Let me count the ways (Sonnet 43)

Elizabeth Barrett Browning - 1806-1861

*How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.*

*I love thee to the depth and breadth and height*

the speaker embarks on a project of listing the ways in which she loves her beloved. By expressing her desire to "count the ways," Browning suggests that her love can be explained on an intellectual level.

At the same time, however, she admits that love is something more profound, spiritual, and is not a rational feeling and can't be explained.

## Psalm 8

To the choirmaster: according to The Gittith. A Psalm of David.

The Wall Street Journal recently wrote of the importance that awe has on our lives. Studies report, "The actual feeling of awe, and experiences that inspire it, benefit us in all sorts of ways, from stronger health to improved relationships."

These "awe experiences" make us more generous, humble, empathetic, trusting, and even help us battle depression.

As Elizabeth Bernstein writes, "Awe is an emotional response to something vast, and it challenges and expands our way of seeing the world." **The researchers conclude, "Awe minimizes our individual identity and attunes us to things bigger than ourselves."**

Elizabeth Bernstein, "Researchers Study Awe and Find It Is Good for Relationships," The Wall Street Journal (2-23-15)

## Psalm 8 (ESV) – Bigger than ourselves

1 O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!  
You have set your glory above the heavens.

**Gamecock victory against Tennessee**

2 Out of the mouth of babies and infants,

**Baptism – Birth and Babies**

3 When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

**Swimming with Marine Life.**

**We have heard them sing.**

4 what is man that you are mindful of him,  
and the son of man that you care for him?

5 Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly  
beings and crowned him with glory and honor.

**Christ the King**

6 You have given him dominion over the works of your hands;

**Stewardship – Care for Creation**

you have put all things under his feet,  
7 all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field,  
8 the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,  
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

C.S. Lewis: "I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment ...

It is not out of compliment that lovers keep on telling one another how beautiful they are; the delight is incomplete till it is expressed.

It is frustrating to have discovered a new author and not to be able to tell anyone how good he is; to come suddenly, at the turn of the road, upon some mountain valley of unexpected grandeur and then to have to keep silent because the people with you care for it no more than for a tin can in the ditch; to hear a good joke and find no one to share it with ... .

Fully to enjoy is to glorify. In commanding us to glorify Him, God is inviting us to enjoy Him."

9 O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

*How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.*

**Stewardship as a response to AWE.**