

REFLECTIONS

Thoughts on nature and the Christian faith - 8/12/19

***"Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights!"
- Ps. 148:1***



There is a nature preserve in southeastern Ohio near the Hocking Hills region called Conkles Hollow. This image was taken from the rim trail that circles the hollow which many consider the deepest in Ohio. There are many places along the rim trail which, if one were to fall, would result in a 200 foot drop and almost certain death. In order to maintain a sense of wilderness, there are no fences or safeguards along the trail. Wandering off the trail is a very risky thing to do, and several people have died here as a result of their carelessness. I stood on the rock outcropping pictured here and was amazed at the vastness and depth of what lay before me. This is a place to be cautious, but also a place to praise the One who has formed sacred spots like this in our world. As I watched the morning mist slowly dissipate from the valley before me, I couldn't help but call to mind that ancient question, *"What is man that Thou art mindful of him?"* That God would endow a sinful man like myself with eyes to see and feet to transport me to places like this boggles my mind. That God would choose to love and bless people who daily ignore and rebel against him should call forth from each of us what I could not help but do as I stood on that cliff surrounded by his majesty - praise Him. Praise him for who he is. Praise him for what he does. Praise him for his holiness, his love, his compassion. I walked the rest of that trail tired, but with a joy and peace that I seldom find elsewhere. I had entered a temple and found the Lord of my life there. I had praised him in the heights. I had communed with the Creator of all there is, was, or ever will be. And I was changed. Jo and our dog Boo were patiently waiting for me back in the Jeep when I returned. Some day when Jo regains her strength, I will take her to this place. And we will worship together. I can't wait. - John