

2024 Christmas Series Part 1
“His Name Shall Be Called”
Wonderful Counselor - Isaiah 9:6

Nevertheless the gloom *will not be* upon her who is distressed, As when at first He lightly esteemed The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, And afterward more heavily oppressed *her*, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, In Galilee of the Gentiles.

²The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.

³You have multiplied the nation *And* increased its joy;

They rejoice before You According to the joy of harvest,

As *men* rejoice when they divide the spoil.

⁴For You have broken the yoke of his burden And the staff of his shoulder, The rod of his oppressor,

As in the day of Midian.

⁵For every warrior’s sandal from the noisy battle, And garments rolled in blood, Will be used for burning *and* fuel of fire.

⁶For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷Of the increase of *His* government and peace *There will be* no end,

Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Pray

The Birth of a Baby is such an amazing thing! –

A)Back in September our 4th grand baby came into the world –Beautiful healthy girl

Piper Jean Sanford.

B)When a Baby is born the Parents usually send out what? A birth announcement

1)Babies gender – name – Ht wt.

C)I read a story about one couple who after many hard hours of labor, welcomed their new baby boy into the world.

Exhausted but ecstatic, the father took on the responsibility of notifying their friends and family.

A)Sleep-deprived and still processing the whirlwind of emotions, he decided to send out a group text with the big news.

B)However, thanks to autocorrect and his blurry vision, his message read:

“It’s a boy! 8 lbs of pure chaos. Mom and baby are doing fine. Dad is permanently scarred but alive. Please send tacos.”

C)The replies started flooding in:

➤ “Congrats! How many tacos do you need?”

➤ “Is ‘chaos’ his middle name?”

➤ “We’ll send a therapist, too.”

What we have before us in Isaiah 9:6 is a birth announcement –

A)But this birth announcement is given 700 yrs before the before the baby is born.

B)But this announcement is exactly what the nation of Israel and the world needed at this particular time in history.

C)Consider the context of this prophecy.

It was a very dark time in the nation of Israel because of their rebellion against God.

A)The people of Israel were facing a threat from the growing superpower of Assyria

B)Assyria would eventually destroy the northern kingdom of Israel and lead many Jews into captivity.

C)In the midst of this ominous and inevitable threat 1)the prophet Isaiah addressed this situation by promising the coming of a future King.

Isaiah announces a royal birth:

A)“the government shall be upon his shoulder” (Isaiah 9:6); “of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom” (Isaiah 9:7).

B)Luke echoed these words of Isaiah when he wrote of the Messiah’s birth in Luke 1:32-33

“the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end”

C)The Apostle Matthew also referred to Isaiah's words when he spoke of the beginning of Jesus Ministry in Matthew 4

12 Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. 13 And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

15“The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles:

16The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned.” Matthew 4:12-15

D)The Light of the world who was promised 700 yrs before shows up in the person of Jesus.

Notice in this birth announcement the child is given four different names or titles.

A)The titles are an indication of what this special child will be and what he will do.

- **“Wonderful Counselor”** indicates that Jesus will be a supernatural source of extraordinary wisdom — amazing news for those who need guidance.
- **“Mighty God”** indicates that Jesus will be divinely strong and powerful — amazing news for those who are weak. “
- **“Everlasting Father”** indicates that Jesus will care for his people forever, as a father cares for his children — amazing news for those who are alone and unappreciated.
- **“Prince of Peace”** indicates that Jesus will bring deep well-being and right relationships — amazing news for all of us who lack peace with each other and with God.

B)Over the next four weeks we are going to consider each one of these names and their application to our lives

C)Today we are starting with the name: Wonderful Counselor

The complexities of modern life, both in public and in private, reveal very quickly to us our need of help.

A)It is increasingly common—to overhear someone saying,

B)“I am seeing a counselor for that,” or “I am in counseling.”

C) I'm old enough to remember when such a statement would not have been offered willingly; 1)Something people didn't like to admit to or were maybe embarrassed by

D)Seen as a sign of weakness

But that has changed in recent years – people will seek counseling for all sorts of things.

A)Past trauma – Marriage problems -Life coaching –

B)Modern technology has only made our lives more complicated and troublesome at times.

C)I have felt like I was in need of counseling – after spending 10 minutes talking to an automated phone AI.

1)Exasperated and yelling into the phone – Can I please just speak to a real person?

Listen if you feel overwhelmed by life today – I have incredible news for you.

A)Jesus is our Wonderful Counselor. - Let's break this down a bit

B)Wonderful speaks of a miracle, a marvel, a marvelous thing or something extraordinary,

1)unusual or astounding which causes a sense of great amazement.

C)Counselor speaks of one who is able to advise, give direction and wisdom.

D)Talking Wisdom and ability that is other worldly – not of this world.

1)Beyond what we could experience in talking to any other person

I read of a PASTOR who was on a train, and he noticed a man looking out the window. And, as they went past the landscape—and it was beautiful landscape—but that man kept saying, “Wonderful—wonderful.”

He'd pause and look for a while, wipe the tears from his eyes, and would say, "Wonderful."

The preacher's curiosity was aroused, and he went over and sat by this man. And, he said, "I've never seen someone enjoy a train ride quite so much. Can you tell me why it is so wonderful?"

He said, "Sir, you don't understand." He said, "I've just had surgery," I have been without sight for years and years and now, I am seeing things that I'd long since forgotten.

I'd forgotten how blue the sky was, how green the grass was, how beautiful the trees, how bright the flowers."

"It's Just wonderful—it's wonderful."

It is interesting how easy it is for us to lose sight of the Blessings we have in the Lord.

A) Things that should wow us and capture our hearts – become routine to us – AMY'S HAIR

I pray God today that our hearts might be reignited in amazement as to who Jesus is as our wonderful counselor

Qualities of a good counselor?

A) Accessible, Good listener, Wise (Give good advice and direction)

B) Patient- able to let you vent and ramble and verbal process- not tune you out or interrupt

C) Trustworthy- Reveal my deepest darkest thoughts and fears –

1) and know that they will not be shared with others

D) Capable – Not just a good listener – but Capable of giving good advice and direction.

Loving -now this is an added bonus. Find a Counselor who genuinely cares about you.

A) You are not just another patient – not just an hour in their schedule –

B) but you are really on their heart – deep care – love

C) Sympathetic and empathetic – Another incredible bonus – if you can find a counselor who feels your pain

1) Realize in some way or form – they have walked in your shoes – they have lived through a similar situation.

D) Well how does Jesus live up to those Qualities

Is Jesus accessible?

He said I will never leave you or forsake you - Hebrews 13:15

A) Always there and always available – You call – he is there – in fact he is there even when you don't call.

B) Is Jesus a good listener?

"The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry." Psalms 34:15 NKJV

"For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; 1 Peter 3:12 NKJV

C) He is the God who hears!

D) He is the one who invites you to Cast all your Cares upon him – he cares for you.

1) Not going to get uncomfortable – Repel – make up an excuse to leave the conversation

E) He leans in – He is like tell me more. Lay down your burden

1) LEAVE IT THERE

Is Jesus wise?

The Bible tells us that in Jesus are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Colossians 2:3

A) No one is more wise – The Fullness of God is in him

B) Is Jesus patient?

1 Timothy 1:16 tells us that Jesus patience is perfect.

C) Perfect in patience – Incredibly longsuffering

Is Jesus trustworthy?

A) Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever Hebrews 13:8

B) He is faithful even when we are faithless 2 Timothy 2:13

C) I doubt there are many people in your life you can say that about ?

1) His faithfulness in your life is unconditional

Is Jesus Capable?

A) Psalm 23:3 tells us that he is the good Shepherd who leads us in the path of righteousness for his namesake.

B) His counsel and guidance always leads us in the right paths – if we are willing to listen to it.

C) Ever received Bad Counsel from someone – followed that counsel – ended up in a mess.

D) The counsel of Jesus will never take you down that type of road

Is Jesus loving?

“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning;” Lamentations 3:22 ESV

A) For God so loved the worldonly begotten son

B) God Loved – Jesus in love came – never stops loving you.

1) His love is steadfast – immovable – always abounding

C) Mercies are new every morning – mercy is not getting what you do deserve – New morning mercies

Is Jesus sympathetic and empathetic?

A) To answer this one I would like you to turn to Hebrews 4:14-16

B) Hebrews 4 describes the High priestly ministry of Jesus.

C) When I think of Jesus as the Wonderful counselor – my mind always goes to this passage –

D) The Job of the High priest in Israel was to represent God to the people and the people before God.

E) Jesus is the best High Priest

“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” - Hebrews 4:14-16

Consider 3 things this passage tells us about Jesus our high priest

A) **#1 he is a conquering high priest –**

B) notice how the text says he has passed through the heavens that is a reference to his resurrection and ascension

C) Conquered Satan – Conquered death – man’s greatest enemies

#2 Jesus our high priest is a compassionate high priest, who can sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

A) Jesus our high priest can sympathize with us because he walked in our shoes.

B) Tempted Just like us – He can have both Sympathy and Empathy

C) Body like ours – He experienced Hunger and thirst and fatigue

D) He knew what rejection and betrayal felt like – you name it he was tempted –

1) Only difference is he didn’t give in

E) Which should not discourage us from coming to him – but the opposite – come boldly – HE KNOWS

#3 See He is a Kingly High priest – which means he has resources to help you withstand temptation.

A) He has resources to not just point you to the right path – but to help you walk in it.

B) He has resources to aid you and empower you in your time of need.

Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

A) To come boldly means many things:

B) To come confidently - Knowing you are welcome

C) Come Confidently – Knowing Jesus is Able

It means to come in Faith- He is ready to listen and he will move in your direction.

A) It means coming without Fear – Because he is gracious and ready to forgive

B)It means to come without doubting - He is the Ultimate Promise Keeper
I will close with this story

Samantha had always felt hesitant in her prayers.

A)She believed in God but often felt unworthy to ask for much beyond the basics.

B)After all, she thought, who was she to ask the Creator of the universe for anything significant?

C)One evening, a powerful storm swept through her town.

1)The howling wind rattled the windows, and rain pounded relentlessly.

Samantha's six-year-old son, Ethan, clung to her, trembling. His wide eyes brimmed with fear.

A)"Mom, will God keep us safe?" he asked softly.

B)Samantha hesitated. She felt the weight of his question and her own uncertainty.

C)Could she really ask God to protect them?

1)But then she remembered this verse she had read earlier that week: Hebrews 4:16

"Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." (Hebrews 4:16).

D)Taking a deep breath, Samantha knelt down with Ethan and said, "Let's pray together."

Her voice, shaky at first, grew stronger as she spoke:

A)"Father, we come to You because we know You love us.

B)We ask for Your protection tonight. Keep our home safe and calm our hearts.

1)Thank You for always hearing us."

C)As soon as they finished, Ethan smiled and said, "See? God's got us." Kids

D)His simple faith warmed her heart.

The storm eventually passed without incident. But something shifted in Samantha that night.

A)She realized that coming to God wasn't about being perfect or having the right words—

B)it was about trusting His love.

C)From that day forward, she prayed with boldness, not because of her own worthiness,

1)but because she knew God welcomed her, just as she was.