

Why Jesus? – Because He is the Wonderful Counselor

12/2/18 – Pastor Randy

During this month of December, as we prepare to celebrate Christmas, I am going to answer the question, “Why Jesus?” Why is Jesus such a big deal?

Isaiah 9:6

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Birth announcements and baby showers have been in fashion for a long time but only recently have gender reveal parties become a big thing. Gender reveal parties are the new big fad and the goal is to come up with the most creative and original idea for your gender reveal. Unfortunately, these creative ideas don't all go so well!

This prophesy of Isaiah's was made approx. 700 years before the birth of Christ. It was made during a time in Israel's history when the people of Israel were facing a threat from Assyria. The later part of chapter 9 predicts which would eventually destruction of Israel by the Assyrians. In the first section of Isaiah 9 God promises that one day, God will send a child who will become a King who establishes peace and justice forever.

Even though Isaiah 9:6,7 are not explicitly applied to Jesus in the NT, they were implicitly applied to Jesus when Matthew clearly stated that Jesus was the one who fulfilled the prophesy of Isaiah 9 (Matt. 4:12-16).

So this prophesy, fulfilled by Jesus, points to the role that Jesus will assume in the life of God's people; Jesus is coming to be our King. Does that mean he is not coming to be our Savior? NO! He is the King who has come to save us!! He is our Savior-King! This is so vital for not only Calvary Church but for the whole church today, because we are in a time when many in the church have been deceived into thinking that they can have Jesus as our savior while rejecting him as our King and Lord. We have too often been deceived into thinking that we only need Jesus to forgive us but not to rule us. Saving us from our sin involves forgiving us and ruling over us. His forgiveness and his Lordship are BOTH manifestations of His grace towards us!

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The phrase “His name shall be called” introduced four titles that are descriptive of the character of this promised King. He will be:

1. A Wonderful Counselor
2. Mighty God
3. Everlasting Father
4. Prince of Peace

What is striking about this description of this baby boy is that his titles are ones that are reserved for God. In Isaiah 28:29, God is the one who is wonderful in counsel. God is Israel’s eternal father, and we have this explicit statement that identifies this child as none other than “Mighty God”! A human baby boy who is also God? YES!!

We are going to examine one of these descriptive titles for Jesus over the next four weeks and today we begin with Jesus, The Wonderful Counselor.

As I mentioned earlier, Matthew named Jesus as the one Isaiah had been prophesying about in Isaiah chapter 9. Verse 2 speaks about the impact of the promised wonderful counselor on the people. It reads,

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.”

Spiritual light and darkness are prominent themes in Isaiah. Light represents truth and righteousness. Darkness represents falsehood or ignorance and evil. These themes are carried over into the NT where we find that darkness represents spiritual deception which leads to evil action and light represents the truth of God which leads to righteous living.

Jesus is the Wonderful Counselor. Jesus said I am the way, the truth, and the life. Jesus did not simply teach the truth; He is the truth. On another occasion Jesus said, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8:32,33) Jesus words are truth and this truth leads to a life of freedom from deception and the evil that arises from deception.

Those who rejected Jesus and refused to follow Jesus were rejecting the light and choosing to remain in the dark, meaning they were ignorant of the truth, deceived by the lies of the devil, and as a result they were choosing sin and evil rather than righteousness and goodness. This relationship between these terms is brought out clearly in John 8:12-14.

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” So the Pharisees said to him, “You are

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bearing witness about yourself; **your testimony is not true.** "Jesus answered, "Even if I do bear witness about myself, **my testimony is true,** for I know where I came from and where I am going, but you do not know where I come from or where I am going.

Those who rejected Jesus and refused to follow Jesus were rejecting the light and choosing to remain in the dark, meaning they were ignorant of the truth, deceived by the lies of the devil, and as a result they were choosing sin and evil rather than righteousness and goodness. Beliefs have consequences. Believing the truth leads to behaving right. On the other hand, following lies leads to sin and evil.

On June 16, 2015, The Washington Times ran an article about disability activists petitioning for Peter Singer to be dismissed from Princeton University because he recommended that parents have the right to terminate the life of their children after birth. The article cited a quote Prof. Singer on his own faculty page: "Newborn human babies have no sense of their own existence over time. So killing a newborn baby is never equivalent to killing a person... That doesn't mean that it is not almost always a terrible thing to do. It is, but that is because most infants are loved and cherished by their parents, and to kill an infant is usually to do a great wrong to its parents."

He went on to give the following opinion regarding circumstances where a child is born with a "serious disability".

"...if a decision is taken, by the parents and doctors, that it is better that a baby should die, I believe it should be possible to carry out that decision, not only by withholding or withdrawing life support — which can lead to the baby dying slowly from dehydration or from an infection — but also by taking active steps to end the baby's life swiftly and humanely."

Peter Singer is a very influential philosopher and bioethicist. His opinions on infanticide are just the logical extension of his beliefs as a Darwinian Evolutionist who believes that humans are just a more highly developed species of animal that possesses no more intrinsic value than any other animal species.

This description of the coming Messiah as the "Wonderful Counselor" reveals the divine nature of the Messiah, but it also says something about the work of the Messiah. He will lead us out of darkness into light. The word translated "wonderful" is a stronger word than we might realize. We use "wonderful" as a synonym for "really good". The Hebrew word here speaks of something that is "so wonderful" it could be called "unexplainable", "miraculous", or "awesome". The truth Jesus revealed was, and is so wonderful, so astounding, that it compelled a response.

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I grew up in a church but in my teens I drifted from God as my thinking became more and more influenced by the attitudes and thinking of my non-Christian friends than it was by God's Word. At 17 years old I recommitted my life to Christ and I started to read the gospels and open my heart and mind to the words and actions of Jesus. As I did I found myself in awe of him just like his original hearers who were astonished at his teaching, because it possessed an innate authority they had never experienced.

Jesus words struck right at my heart, revealing and confronting my sin. The truth began to set my mind free from foolish thinking that had taken hold of my mind.

I was selfish and hard hearted. I was a very superficial person before Jesus words started to influence me. My interests were girls, sports, girls, working out, girls and music. Females are not superficial, but my interest in them was. While I would not consider myself to be a misogynistic, I was absolutely guilty of objectifying females. I had adopted racist attitudes and language. I had no concern for people in need whether it be the poor, the elderly or disabled people.

But as I listened to Jesus' words and paid attention to how Jesus treated people, all kinds of people, I found my heart beginning to be softened and my attitudes begin to be changed. Jesus began to influence my values and my behavior. It was like I was walking out of darkness into the light and what was being revealed to me about God, about myself, and about my purpose in life was so wonderful that it compelled a change in the way I lived and what I lived for.

Jesus words They created in me a hunger to want to know even more about the Bible and Christianity. Suddenly I found myself wanting to go to church and listen to the word. I had a new interest in reading, especially in the areas of religion and philosophy. At 18 years of age I went into a Christian bookstore for the first time in my life – at least the first time by my own decision.

I didn't want to just go to church to learn, I wanted to serve. I began teaching a junior high boys Sunday School class when I was only 18. I wanted to help Junior High boys know Christ. Only months before you couldn't have paid me to hang out with junior high boys. As a college student who worked as a janitor in a public elementary school, I adopted a child through World Vision. Not because I was trying

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to score points with God and try and attain heaven by good works. Jesus gave me a heart to want to help.

All of these changes were not because I became a saint! It was because Jesus, the wonderful counselor, began to influence my thinking and my values which in turn influenced my behavior.

Jesus is only a “wonderful counselor” to those who follow his counsel. Jesus said that those who hear his words and act upon them are wise people. We are not wise until Jesus words become authoritative in our lives, determining our values and dictating our decisions.

You just can't be neutral about Jesus! To have faith in Jesus is to form an allegiance to Jesus. In John 6 we read the story of Jesus feeding over 5,000 people with 5 loaves of bread and two fish. After this miracle the crowd was so excited about Jesus that they wanted to make him king. Jesus preceded to scold them for acting as if they had an allegiance to him that was based in who he was rather than on what he could do to make life comfortable for them. Jesus told them that real life came from “eating him” rather than eating bread. He was speaking metaphorically but his audience didn't get it so they became disturbed by his words and John tells us that, “After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him.” Jesus turned to the twelve and said, “Do you want to go away as well?” Peter's reply is crucial to an understanding of saving faith. He said, “Lord, to whom shall we go? **You have the words of eternal life**, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.” Peter professed faith in Jesus. He said, “we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.” But notice that Peter's profession of faith was accompanied by a pledge of allegiance to Jesus. Peter said, “How can we leave from your side when you have the words of life!!”

In his famous book [Mere Christianity](#), Lewis makes this statement, “A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic - on the level with a man who says he is a poached egg - or he would be the devil of hell. You must take your choice. Either this was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us.”

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CLOSE:

Jesus is only a “wonderful counselor” to those who heed his counsel. Jesus said that those who hear his words and act upon them are wise people. We are not wise until Jesus words become authoritative in our lives, determining our values and dictating our decisions.

God has been speaking to us about worship and how what or who we worship influences what kind of people we become. I mentioned last week that greatness demands worship. Whatever, or whoever we perceive as great will compel our worship. When we understand that this child that has been born for us, this son who has been given to us, is the Son of God. When we begin to really listen to Him and learn from both his words and his works; when we really meditate on what He has done for us in coming and dying and rising again for us; then His words will begin to transform our affections, attitudes and actions. Our great admiration and adoration of Jesus will lead to an imitation of Jesus.

When Jesus asks us as he did Peter, “Do you want to follow me or go your own way?”, we will respond like Peter did and say, “Lord, to whom shall we go? **You have the words of eternal life**, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.

Because Jesus is “The Wonderful Counselor” His words compel our response!

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