

His Name Is Wonderful

Michael Catt

What do you do when your back is against the wall? Where do you turn when the bottom drops out on your life? How do you respond when you see society decaying and the culture crumbling before your very eyes? Such was the situation in which Isaiah found himself.

Isaiah lived in perilous, terrible times. Everywhere he looked there was a bad moon on the horizon. The signs of the times were grim. As Isaiah looked to the spiritual horizon, he saw a divine vengeance. Within a generation, the nation of Israel would be overcome and taken into captivity. The Promised Land would lie in waste. The cities would be destroyed and their gates burned. The plush vineyards would be uprooted and the olive groves cut down. The only persons left in the land would be the old and weak.

Isaiah finds himself announcing the impending doom and ruin. Assyria would be the rod of Jehovah's anger. The sins of God's people were obvious. Those blessed by God had turned their backs on God. Judgment was sure to come. In chapter one, Judah's sins are set forth as primarily and fundamentally sins of religion. The people had rebelled against God. They were dull and dead concerning the goodness of God.

In addition, the nation had adopted foreign customs and established evil alliances. They lusted after anything "foreign." God's people were pursuing and imitating worldly ways and making no apologies for it. Social decay and moral filth were predominant.

In chapter five, Isaiah recounts a number of national sins, including greed, dissipation, defiance of Jehovah, hypocrisy, a loss of moral distinctive, and political conceit. For these reasons, Jehovah's coming judgment is sure—there would be no escape.

In chapter nine, we discover God's angry because of Israel's arrogance. Isaiah describes in vivid detail the trials and troubles sent by Jehovah. The depth of their sin and rebellion is summarized five times in chapters nine and ten: "In spite of all this His anger does not turn away, and His hand is still stretched out." Look at all God was doing to get their attention and call them to repentance: invading armies, defeat on the battlefield, and unabated anarchy. On the horizon stood captivity. Yet with the Day of Judgment waiting in the wings, the people persisted in "doing their own thing." Divine discipline has failed; only judgment remains.

In spite of this gloom and doom, Isaiah reveals a ray of hope. One, God will spare a remnant. He encourages his readers with four powerful words, "God is with us" (8:10b). Immanuel is with us, no matter how dark the hour and depressing the times. For those who follow the Lord, the light of the Lord shines in the darkest night.

The most significant revelation is tucked away in chapter nine. It stands out like a full moon against a black sky. It brings hope to the hopeless and encouragement to the downhearted.

Read, if you would, verse two of chapter nine: “The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them.”

What is this bright spot, this great light? With the prospect of impending doom, how can anyone get excited about this light? The answer is in verse six: “For a child will be born to us, a son will be given us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.”

The light was the “star” of Bethlehem, the babe in the manger, the Christ of Christmas. “God with us” literally coming to dwell among us. In the first chapter of John’s Gospel we read, “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. . . . There was the true light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.”

It is obvious, therefore, that the person of this text is none other than the Son of God, the Messiah, Jesus Christ. He is the child born to a virgin. He is the sinless Son who pleased His Father in heaven. He is the One who carried the weight of sin and suffering on His shoulders. No wonder Isaiah begins by saying, “His name is Wonderful!”

Today we live in a dark and decaying world. The increasing presence of the cults and occult, the rise in false spirituality, New Age teachings and pop religion may cause us to fear the future. The ascent of “anything goes” thinking and “I did it my way” living makes one wonder if God has forsaken us. Are we too under the judgment of God? Some say “yes,” others say “not yet.” Whichever may be correct, this one thing is certain: Jesus Christ is wonderful! What the world needs now is a fresh encounter with the Christ who turns death into life, chaos into hope, and war into peace.

All of us were given a name at our birth. My name, Michael, means “messenger of God.” My oldest daughter’s name is Erin, which means “peace.” The name Alfred means “justice.” Allen means “harmony.” Paula means “reserved and timid.” Nancy means “graceful.” Jacob means “supplanter” or “twister.”

No matter what a name means, the person bearing that name can miss the mark in living up to the name. I know some Michaels who are not saved and live like the devil. I’ve met other people named Erin who are holy terrors. I grew up with a guy named Alfred; he stayed in trouble with the law. There are people named Allen who disrupt every organization they join. I’ve met some girls named Paula who were boisterous and loud. I have a cousin named Nancy. She’s a sweet lady, but not graceful. Maybe Jacob is the only person who really lived up to his name. So when God changed his nature, He changed his name.

Not all of us live up to the meaning of our name. Not so with Jesus—He is wonderful! All who have found forgiveness of sin, cleansing from guilt and comfort in prayer will agree. He is called “Wonderful” because He is. This is not a term of flattery. It is simply a name worthy of the Son

of God. One writer has stated, “Those who know Him best declare that the word does not over strain His merits. Instead, it falls far short of His deserving.”

Human language being what it is, we tend to overstate the obvious and understate the incredible. We throw words like “great,” “super,” “wonderful,” and “incredible” around too easily. There’s a huge gap between a winter wonderland and a wonderful Savior. To understand this word, we must look to the original language for insight.

In the Hebrew, the word “wonderful” is “pala.” It comes from the root word for “miracle.” King James translates the word “marvelous,” “wonder,” and “wonderful.” It is something extraordinary. The word is often used of God’s acts of judgment and redemption. Referring to the verb form “pala,” Vines writes, “As can be seen from the suggested meanings, this verb is not easy to define. As a verb, it is based on the noun for ‘wonder, marvel,’ so it expresses the idea of doing or making a wondrous thing.” Found in both biblical and modern Hebrew, ‘pala’ occurs some 70 times in the Old Testament. The verb is found for the first time in Genesis 18:14, “Is anything too hard for the Lord?”

Vines continues,

“Pala” is used primarily with God as its subject, expressing actions that are beyond the bounds of human powers or expectations. This idea is well expressed by the psalmist: “This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes...” Ps. 118:23. Deliverance from Egypt was the result of God’s wondrous acts: “And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in [it]...” Exod. 3:20. Praise is constantly due God for all His wonderful deeds (Ps. 9:1). At the same time, God does not require anything of His people that is too hard for them (Deut. 30:11). Although something may appear impossible to man, it still is within God’s power: “If it be marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvelous in mine eyes? saith the Lord of hosts.” Zech. 8:6.

In the noun form, “pala” is translated, “wonder, marvel.” This noun frequently expresses the “wonder,” the “extraordinary aspects,” of God’s dealings with His people (Exod. 15:11; Ps. 77:11; Isa. 29:14). The messianic title, “marvel of a counselor” (Isa. 9:6) points toward God’s Anointed continuing the marvelous acts of God.¹

Even a casual reading of the use of this word will reveal the wonder of God and His plan for man.

Who is like You among the gods, O LORD? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in praises, working wonders? (Exodus 15:11)

¹ *Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words* (Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985).

I shall remember the deeds of the LORD; surely I will remember Your wonders of old.
(Psalm 77:11)

You are the God who works wonders; You have made known Your strength among the peoples. (Psalm 77:14)

He wrought wonders before their fathers in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan.
(Psalm 78:12)

Will you perform wonders for the dead? Will the departed spirits rise and praise you? Selah. . . . Will Your wonders be made known in the darkness? And Your righteousness in the land of forgetfulness? (Ps. 88:10, 12)

The heavens will praise Your wonders, O LORD; Your faithfulness also in the assembly of the holy ones. (Psalm 89:5)

Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul observes them. (Psalm 119:129)

O LORD, You are my God; I will exalt You, I will give thanks to Your name; for You have worked wonders, plans formed long ago, with perfect faithfulness. (Isaiah 25:1)

Therefore behold, I will once again deal marvelously with this people, wondrously marvelous; and the wisdom of their wise men will perish, and the discernment of their discerning men will be concealed. (Isaiah 29:14)

It is obvious the word carries with it a sense of awe, reverence, and astonishment. The Greek word “ethaumasán” is picked up in Luke’s gospel to describe the coming of the Messiah. Luke 2:18, “And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds.” Again, in the Greek, the word means, “to marvel.” The word is used of the Person of Christ in 2 Thessalonians at the time of the shining forth of His second coming.

Before we look further at Luke’s account of the birth of the Messiah, I want to note a few instances where the word is translated as “marveled” or “wondered” so you can get the picture in your mind of the significance of this word.

In Matthew 8:10, Jesus marveled at a man’s faith. In verse 27 of the same chapter, the men marveled that the wind and sea obeyed Jesus. Matthew also reveals that upon seeing “the dumb speaking, the crippled restored, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing...” the multitude marveled and glorified God.

Let’s return now to the night of His birth. Wonder was the first emotion expressed by those who first saw the baby Jesus. Wonder was the reaction of Joseph and Mary at the things which were said about Him (Luke 2:33).

We have all heard about the great wonders of the world. But there is no event, no location, and certainly no person who has ever created more wonder and amazement than Jesus Christ. His incarnation is a wonder to us. How God became a man and dwelt among us is a wonder to our finite minds. How the eternal Son of God became a baby in a manger, born of a virgin, *is* a wonder.

When I read the great accounts of God's intervention in the Old Testament—His deliverance of Noah from the flood, the parting of the Red Sea, the sun standing still for Joshua, the shadow on the dial of Ahaz turned back ten degrees—they are all amazing to me. But they stand in shadow compared to the reality of God becoming man.

When Messiah came, we were delivered from the flood tide of sin; a bridge across the great divide between God and man was built. The Son of God hung on a cross, in pitch darkness, so that I could stand in the shadow of grace. He is a wonderful God.

Dr. David G. Hause writes, "He is the seed of woman, yet the Son of God. He is the child of a day, yet the monarch of eternity. He is a newborn of a span's length, yet He is king of the ages. Omnipotence in a little baby's hand. Omnipresence in a little baby's feet. Omniscience in a little baby's eye. The voice of Jehovah in a little baby's cry." Jesus is so wonderful!

God's Son was born and He was given. He was both God and man. God in flesh, dwelling among us. Everything He did was wonderful. Everything He said was wonderful. In everything He is, indeed, wonderful.

Those who listened to Him, "wondered at the gracious words which were falling from His lips..." His miracles were wonderful. His parables still cause us to wonder at the depth of meaning in every word. His passion for Jerusalem, His love for publicans, His compassion for Samaria, His patience with the disciples, His acceptance of Judas, His silence before Pilate, His willingness to face the cross, His appearances after the resurrection—all bring amazement and wonder to our hearts.

Use your imagination. Put yourself in the temple next to a twelve-year-old expounding on great theological texts. Sit down on the Mount of Beatitudes and listen to those words that still capture our hearts and minds. We find ourselves agreeing with the hymn writer, Philip Paul Bliss, "Sing them over again to me, wonderful words of life; let me more of their beauty see, wonderful words of life."

Only someone as wonderful as Jesus could use a sparrow to teach us about how much God loves us. Only God can reveal Himself in the beauty of a flower. It takes a Wonderful Counselor to comfort the brokenhearted. Surely the word "wonder" comes to mind when we see what Jesus did with a small boy's lunch of loaves and fish. Only the God of heaven can take the common and make it supernatural.

If He is not wonderful, then explain how He mystified Nicodemus, an educated Pharisee. Come to some rational explanation regarding Pilate's response to Him. Here is the God-Man, who overwhelmed scholars, stunned the politicians, touched the lepers, and forgave prostitutes. He walked the hills of Galilee, and they wondered at Him. His enemies couldn't explain Him...and they couldn't ignore Him.

Although it is difficult to speak of the cross as something wonderful, it is. We glory in the cross of our Lord. By His stripes, we are healed from our sin. In His death, we find life everlasting. Even when He was beaten, cursed, and abused, He never responded. The Scriptures tell us Pilate "wondered greatly."

If Jesus had not died, the chains of sin would still hold this sinner captive. Because He did die for my sin, He has set the captive free. In His death, I find life. At His cross I find pardon, forgiveness, and cleansing. I stand in awe of what God has done for me, and for all who will believe.

And the cross is not the end! Three days after His crucifixion, Jesus rose from the grave. Peter ran to the tomb and stood in wonder when he looked in and saw it was empty. The empty tomb makes life wonderful and the thought of heaven incredible. Death has lost its sting. The grave has been defeated. Jesus Christ is risen from the dead, the first fruits of those that sleep. In light of this, shouldn't we join Isaiah in saying, "His name is Wonderful!"

Could You Recommend a Good Counselor?

Times have changed. In the days of my grandparents and parents, counseling was an obscure profession and was predominantly relegated to state run institutions. As late as the 1970s it was rare to find a Christian counselor in many smaller communities. One normally had to drive to a "big city" to find someone to help. Even then, counseling was pastoral and limited in scope.

In recent years, we have seen an enormous rise in professional counseling, counseling centers, support groups, and self-help books. The psychology section in bookstores has exploded. In many lives, psychology now takes precedent over theology.

When people read Isaiah 9, their minds are automatically drawn to the Christmas season. We tend to link certain Scriptures and songs of the faith to seasons and events, like Christmas and Easter. This is an unfortunate outgrowth of our limited concept of God and His plan for man.

Any observant person of modern culture will note that Christmas is one of the most depressing times of the year. Researchers have determined that more people suffer depression during the period between Thanksgiving and Christmas than any other time of the year. Why?

One obvious reason is that everyone thinks the holiday season means happiness. We are expected to "Ho! Ho! Ho!" our way through the yuletide season. Truthfully, some folks feel

more like “Woe! Woe! Woe!” Many will fake their joy, but that in itself produces guilt which can lead to further depression.

Christmas is traditionally considered a family time in America. Even beer commercials picture the family “home for the holidays.” The pictures of laughter, the fireplace, and snow on the ground are very familiar. The Norman Rockwell, all-American family, sitting around the fire and sipping hot chocolate while the kids roast chestnuts on the open fire is on our cards and in our minds. However, for many people Christmas is one of the loneliest times of the year.

There’s always the first Christmas after the death of a loved one. The first Christmas after a painful divorce. The first Christmas with joint custody, and it’s your turn to be alone. The circle is broken...and so is your heart.

One of the guys I grew up with has suffered through this in recent years. He and his family were visiting their grandmother a few years ago. Tragically, the oldest son hung himself in the garage on Christmas Eve and was discovered by his grandmother. There will never be another Christmas for that family without that painful memory.

There is also the reality of a family gathering for the holidays, but experiencing no Christmas cheer. Tension in the air is thicker than the toys under the tree. There is obvious strain that outshines the tinsel. An overwhelming sense of bitterness, anger, hurt, and cynicism fills the room. The family framework is there, but the family isn’t functioning on all cylinders.

The hectic times in which we live add to the stress. Our overloaded calendars leave us running on fumes and living on empty. The sense of obligation to show up, make an appearance, and do the right thing in the eyes of men overrides common sense. Rather than enjoying the season, we allow animosity and anxiety to add their weight to our already overwrought bodies. The result is fatigue, depression, and exhaustion.

In times like this, we probably don’t need a shrink. However, it would be nice if we had someone who could just listen. Someone who knows our hurts, senses our pain, wipes our tears, and feels our pain. We need someone who knows more than we do and is willing to help (without pointing a finger and giving us a thirty-minute lecture).

Jehovah has provided such a person. He is the Wonderful Counselor. If I need wisdom, He can give it. After all, if He can run the whole cosmos, He can counsel me in my little world. With this counselor, I don’t have to make an appointment or check my insurance to see if I’m covered. Nor do I have to wonder when my time is up.

The Counselor can guide me on my journey and lead me in the everlasting path. His advice makes my path straight, my way peaceful, and my home secure. I can absorb His words, lean on His arms, walk in His steps, and find comfort in His bosom. A counselor is one who gives advice and direction. God has provided through the presence of the Holy Spirit, plus 66 books containing His Word and will for us. We can trust His Word and stand on His promises.

The Hebrew word for “counselor” is a primitive root that means “to advise; reflexively, to deliberate or resolve.” In the King James, the word is translated “to take advice, consult, give or take counsel, or guide.” The verb form means to advise or consult. It is used in the Old Testament as a verb approximately 80 times. It first appears in Exodus 18 where Jethro says to Moses, “I will give you counsel, and God shall be with you.” In Numbers 24:14, the Jerusalem Bible translates the word as “I will let you know.” In the majority of cases, the word is used to describe the giving of good advice or wise counsel.

The most familiar usage of the noun form is in Isaiah 9. “In the basis of syntax involved, it is probably better to translate the familiar ‘Wonderful Counselor’ (NASB, TEV) as Wonder-Counselor (JB, NAB) or ‘Wonder of a Counselor.’ The NEB renders it ‘in purpose wonderful.’ Another possibility is that of separating the terms: ‘Wonderful, Counselor’ (KJV).”²

Examples of the usage of this word when referring to the Lord include:

I will bless the LORD who has counseled me; indeed, my mind instructs me in the night.
(Psalm 16:7)

I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with
My eye upon you. (Psalm 32:8)

Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, but counselors of peace have joy.
(Proverbs 12:20)

Sin entered this world because Eve took bad counsel from the serpent. Satan advised Eve with deceit and a lie. He questioned and challenged the Word of God. He advised Eve to disobey the Lord and violate God’s clear command.

Satan still has his counselors. Some are free, others are expensive. Many people offer mankind ungodly advice. Some even dare to offer us their counsel when we don’t seek it. One of the modern forms of counsel comes from the media and advertising industries. For instance:

- If you’re bored, buy something. Charge it. Buy now—there’s no interested for 90 days!
- If you need a spark in your life, have an affair. Meet someone on the Internet. Contact a dating service. Go to a singles bar.
- If you need money, we’ve got instant credit.
- If you’re looking for an escape, take a cruise, visit our island, or come to our theme park.
- If you need advice, call a psychic, read your horoscope, visit a palm reader.

The list can go on ad nauseam. The point is that a good and godly counselor will not hand out advice in nice, neat packages. There are no easy answers, cheap solutions, or “take two

² *Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words* (Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985).

capsules before bedtime” resolutions. A good counselor will listen, size up the situation, weigh all the evidence, and tell you what you need to hear—not what you want to hear.

That’s why Jesus is a Wonderful Counselor. He can see straight through our facades. He knows both sides of the story. He can put His finger on the real problem as opposed to the apparent symptoms. He knows the complexities of the human spirit. He also knows how to meet us at the point of our need. While He hates sin, He loves sinners. His love and mercy are enduring. His grace is overwhelming. His counsel is always to heal, never to harm.

He has been that way since the beginning. If you look behind the veil of recorded history and into eternity past, you can see His counsel. He is there, before Genesis 1:1. Before the world was formed, before the first creature was created, the Counselor was with the Father. Notice as the Word enlightens us: “Let *us* make man in our image” (italics mine), not, “I will make man.” The Father, Son, and Spirit were all in agreement. Christ was with God when the blueprints of the universe were drafted.

For further proof (if you want to seek someone else on this issue), let me direct your attention to the words of the Counselor recorded in His Book of Life. This is the counsel of wisdom.

I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, and I find knowledge and discretion. The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way, and the perverted mouth, I hate. Counsel is mine and sound wisdom; I am understanding, power is mine. By me kings reign and rulers decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, all who judge rightly. I love those who love me; and those who diligently seek me will find me. Riches and honor are with me, enduring wealth and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, even pure gold, and my yield than choicest silver. I walk in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of justice, to endow those who love me with wealth, that I may fill their treasuries. The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way, before his works of old. From everlasting I was established, from the beginning, from the earliest times of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills I was brought forth; while He had not yet made the earth and the fields, nor the first dust of the world. When He established the heavens, I was there, when he inscribed a circle on the face of the deep, when He made firm the skies above, when the springs of the deep became fixed, when He set for the sea its boundary so that the water should not transgress His command, when He marked out the foundations of the earth; then I was beside Him, as a master workman; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him. (Proverbs 8:12-30)

These words contained in Proverbs reveal that Christ was co-creator with God the Father. John affirms this truth in the first chapter of his gospel. “All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.” If He didn’t do it, it didn’t get done. The writer of Hebrews joins the witness of John and reveals, “You, Lord, in the beginning, did lay the

foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Your hands.” Together the divine Trinity stood on nothing, and caused everything to come into being.

William S. Plumer wrote, “Everything above us speaks of the greatness of God, not of man.” Tozer said, “Creation is the setting forth of Jesus Christ as Lord and Sovereign.” Truly, all creatures *are* of our God and King.

Not only was Jesus present in the past and in creation, but He is also present now with His counsel. When the world was created, the Lord God did not become a “distant deity” as some have erroneously imagined. He remains at the wheel, guiding, directing, and controlling His creation. He will be at the helm from beginning to end. He was there on the first day of creation. He will be present when the new heaven and earth are formed.

His laws govern this world. All the laws of science are His. We do not break His laws; we break ourselves on His laws. The man who jumps from a tall building does not break the law of gravity; the law of gravity breaks him! This world is not, as it sometimes appears to our finite eye, running out of control. The psalmist complained that the Lord was letting evil men get away with murder. As he sought the counsel of the Lord, he discovered how quickly the lifestyle of the rich and famous can come to an end. Only when you get the counsel of God can you view life from an eternal perspective.

We need His counsel because we don’t know it all. Unfortunately, people want easy answers to complicated questions. We want the quick fix—the cure-all at a discount price. We want our advisors to agree with our assessment of the problem. We demand explanations and God’s Word only gives promises. We aren’t very comfortable when God’s counsel goes something like this: “You’re going to have to trust Me on this one.” Even when we get answers, there is no guarantee we’ll like them. That’s why, when answers aren’t enough, there is Jesus.

Most people seem to think pastors have all the answers. I don’t even know all the questions. I took one psychology course in college and was totally confused. My gift is prophet, not mercy. I’m into “Thus saith the Lord,” not “If I hear what you are saying, I think what you need is...” (Hey, at least I’m up front about it!) Some ministers think they are good counselors because they quote a Bible verse for every problem. Too many take those verses out of context. The truth is, much to the surprise of some, the Bible doesn’t speak to every specific situation.

There’s nothing in the Bible about which car to buy, or even if you should buy a car. My opinion is, it’s no longer a new car after the first payment. Once you get beyond “upside down” in your payment book, any car with a good rebate is a possibility. Nor is there anything in the Word about how to determine if someone is “Mr. Right.” There are character traits to look for, but no etch-a-sketch of the perfect spouse. Sorry.

You won’t find specifics of what town to live in, what church to go to, what house to live in, whether to rent or buy, or what school to send your kids to. When we were making a decision about moving from a pastorate in Oklahoma to Georgia, I didn’t get a message in the sky. My

wife and I had a few discussions along the “pros and cons” line, but that wasn’t the determining factor. Most of us are shrewd enough to stack the list the way we want it to go. As a friend says, “It looks so good; it *must* be the will of God.”

Our heavenly Counselor doesn’t give pat answers. Through the years, people have come to me, dumping thirty years of problems on my desk and expecting an answer in three minutes. I’ve tried to warn people about my lack of counseling skills. I tell them the last three people who came to me for help jumped out my window or ran out the door before our time was up. I’m not a good counselor. My name doesn’t appear on any list of counselors I’m aware of.

As you read the Scriptures, you find people coming to Christ and asking, “What shall we do?” It’s the million-dollar question. Here are some of the answers from the Word: pray always, grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord, watch and pray, love one another, forgive one another, pray for your enemies, do good to all men, pray for those in authority, forgive as God has forgiven you, repent of your sins.

Do you need a counselor today? Are you panicked? Let me make a suggestion: “Come unto Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Do you need salvation? Come to Christ. Do you need wisdom? “If anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask of God...” Do you need comfort? “I will not leave you comfortless.” For all this and more, there is a remedy—come to Christ. Those who seek Christ as their Counselor will find Him to be their Comforter.

What a Mighty God We Serve

Words like “might,” “power,” and “great” tend to be overused in our day and time. Their meanings have become so watered down that we now have “great” hot dogs, “great” cars, and “great” clothes. So, too, the word “mighty” is overused. We say something is “mighty fine.” Sportscasters refer to a head coach as a “mighty fine football coach.” In a biblical context, the meaning of such a word should never be so diluted.

Isaiah, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, gave us some revealing word pictures of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though the terms are not comprehensive—there are dozens of other terms—they paint one incredible, multifaceted picture of the Lord.

The term “mighty God” has been studied for centuries. One prominent preacher of the twentieth century said, “The literature which has been written on the subject is a study in itself. The words “mighty God” have also been translated “the Illustrious One,” “the Eradicator,” the One who gives light to men,” or “the Shining One.” Dr. Alexander MacLaren tells us that the word “mighty” implies “one who is victorious in battle”—a conquering hero.

In the Hebrew word for God (El), there is a root meaning of “strength.” When the word is a proper name, it can be translated, “the mighty One,” or “the strong One.” This term was the most common general description of deity in the ancient Near East. The word could stand

alone, or it could be combined with other words to create a compound term for deity. When compounded, it would also identify the nature or function of God.

According to Vines, “This tradition of the Hebrew ‘el as a “God” who revealed Himself in power and entered into a covenant relationship with His people was prominent in both poetry (Psalm 7:11; 85:8), and prophecy (Isaiah 43:12; 46:9). The name of ‘el was commonly used by the Israelites to denote supernatural provision or power. This was both normal and legitimate, since the covenant between “God” and Israel assured an obedient and holy people that the creative forces of the universe would sustain and protect at all times.”³

The short title El (from which some scholars say “Elohim” is derived) is the most primitive Semitic name, and its root meaning is probably “to be strong.” It is translated some 250 times as “God” and used in circumstances where the great power of God is indicated. El brought Israel out of Egypt. Nothing is too difficult for someone who created the world and now rules it. The mighty God created the powerful waves that crash against the mighty rocks on the seacoast. He is, in every way, the mighty God.

Why? Because the other word used here by Isaiah is “gibbor” which also means strength or might. By implication the word refers to a powerful warrior or a champion. The word appears 159 times in the Old Testament. The essential thought behind it is one of power, strength, and victory. When the two are put together, “El Gibbor” translates, “The Mighty Strong One.” Read carefully these words by Warren Wiersbe from his excellent study, *His Name Is Wonderful*:

What a paradox that a babe in a manger should be called *mighty*! Yet even as a baby, Jesus Christ revealed power. His birth affected the heavens as that star appeared. The star affected the Magi, and they left their homes and made that long journey to Jerusalem. Their announcement shook King Herod and his court. Jesus’ birth brought angels from heaven and simple shepherds from their flocks on the hillside. Midnight became midday as the glory of the Lord appeared to men.

When Jesus Christ is prophesied as the “Mighty God” it is a reference to deity. Jesus is the Son of God and God Himself. What the Messiah came to do could only be done by God. Only God can redeem sinful man; only God can forgive sin; only God can conquer death, hell, and the grave; only God can overcome Satan; only God can promise new life; only God would be willing to go to the cross to die for unworthy sinners. The “Mighty God” is the God of reconciliation.

When the angel appeared to Joseph he said, “Call his name Immanuel,” which being interpreted is “God with us.” While Isaiah may not have known the full implications of the trinity, he believed in the incarnation of God. He prophesied and hoped for the day when God would come to earth in human flesh and offer a once-for-all sacrifice.

³ *Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words* (Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985).

Through the years, there has been much debate over the deity of Christ. Some will call Him a prophet, a teacher, a good man, but not God. They might acknowledge His goodness, but not His God nature. To deny the deity of Christ is to call him a liar.

In 1 John 2:22, 23 we read, “Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the Antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.” If Jesus Christ is not God in flesh, if He is not the mighty God, then every Christian is an idolater. We are worshiping a god who isn’t God. We are violating the first commandment, “Thou shalt have no other god before me.” The one sin God hates above all others is idolatry. To deny Jesus Christ as the mighty God is to reject every prophecy and revelation of the Old and New Testaments.

If Christ is not the mighty God, then those who have died believing in Christ are damned to hell. If He is not mighty God, then our preaching is in vain, our faith is in vain, and we are still dead in trespasses and sin.

He is mighty God because all history is incomprehensible without Christ. A. H. Strong in his *Systematic Theology, Volume 1*, defines God as “the infinite and perfect spirit in whom all things have their source, support, and end.” We must add one note to this: the infinite and perfect spirit in whom all things have their source, support and end and who became incarnate as Jesus of Nazareth.:

The famous author and apologist C. S. Lewis wrote a classic work entitled *Mere Christianity*. He writes:

I’m trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: “I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept His claim to be God.” That is the one thing we must not say. 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 level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the devil of hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. . . . You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come up with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.

If you are going to determine who mighty God is, you have to go to the source: God’s Word. Hundreds of years before the birth of Christ, Isaiah wrote his prophecy. It is the cornerstone of all prophecies concerning the birth of Jesus Christ. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Isaiah was able to see into the future and give us an inerrantly accurate picture of the birth of the Savior. The Jews received this news as a prophecy of a coming king. This King would come...and forever alter human history.

This was no ordinary child. He would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14). This son would be “given,” not born. The term “given” speaks of Christ’s preexistent deity. “Although He existed in

the form of God, He did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men..." (Philippians 2:6, 7).

When Jesus walked the face of the earth, He never backed away from claiming to be God in flesh. He said, "I and my Father are one." In John 14 we read:

Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how do you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; otherwise believe on account of the works themselves. (vv. 8-11)

This statement is a clear affirmation by Jesus Christ of His deity. Jesus did not claim to be a god; He made emphatic claims to be God. Oswald Chambers said, "The characteristics of God Almighty are mirrored for us in Jesus Christ. Therefore if we want to know what God is like we must study Jesus Christ."

The Apostle Paul affirmed his belief in Jesus as the mighty God. "...whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen" (Romans 9:5). "For in him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority" (Colossians 2:9, 10). "And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:8-11).

Notice the word "appearance" in the Philippians passage. In the Greek, it is the word "morphe," meaning "the form by which a person or thing strikes the vision" or "external appearance." King James uses the word "form." It is the sum total of the qualities that make something what it is. When Christ is described as being in the "form" of God, He is the sum of all characteristics which make up the being called God.

Christians believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God because He said so. The union between God the Father and God the Son will allow no divorce; they are one. This is the explanation of Christ's incredible impact on the world. There is no other explanation for His mark on history than God came and dwelt among men. No mere human has ever affected the course of human events like Jesus.

The Scriptures talk about the fullness of time. Yet Jesus' birth was predicted before the printing press. He was born hundreds of years before mass communication. He arrived in an obscure, unknown village in the eyes of the world. He lived in poverty, a mere carpenter. He was raised

in relative obscurity. No royal training, no pedigree, no position of influence. For a time as a child, He was exiled to Egypt. The very town of His upbringing, Nazareth, was synonymous with that which is little and least. He traveled in a small circle. He never wrote a book (so to speak). He never wrote a song, but has inspired millions of songs. Yet, here we are thousands of years after His birth, death, and resurrection, and His influence marches on. All the lines of history converge upon Him.

While He never earned a degree, men with dozens of degrees search His simple teachings to try to fathom the depth of His words. The least that was ever said about Him was that “He went about doing good.” The most significant thing said about Him? “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” At His death, the Roman guard said, “Surely, this man is the Son of God.” In life and in death, He cast history’s longest shadow. No one can explain Him. No one can put His life in a nice, neat package. He is the mighty God. The prophecies, His birth, death and resurrection, all prove this. The fact that He will one day sit upon a throne of judgment should be consternation to His enemies and consolation to His people.

The whole gospel is fulfilled and contained in Christ. This mighty God demands more allegiance than any monarch, dictator, or general who has ever lived. The difference is that He has the right to make such a demand. No wonder Isaiah calls Him “mighty God.”

The Head of the Family: The Eternal Father

The name before us is a reference to God the Son as Creator of heaven and earth. In Hebrews 1 we read, “You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Your hands; they will perish, but You remain; and they all will become old like a garment, and like a mantle You will roll them up; like a garment they will also be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not come to an end” (vv. 10-12). In these verses, God the Father is speaking to God the Son, Jesus Christ.

If Jesus was present in the beginning as Creator, one must conclude that He existed before the beginning, and therefore would be without beginning. “In the beginning was the Word” (John 1:1). It seems strange to us that the Son of God would be identified as the Eternal Father by Isaiah.

To understand this name, we need to reflect on the Hebrew concept of “father.” There are very few references to God as Father in the Old Testament. The emphasis on the fatherhood of God begins in the New Testament with God the Son.

If you were to take a concordance and search for the word “father,” you would find it used some 678 times. The term, according to an Old Testament Jew, would mean “originator of” or “author of.” In many of the passages, the term is redemptive in character.

For instance, “He will cry to me, ‘You are my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation’” (Psalm 89:26). “For You are our Father, though Abraham does not know us, and Israel does not recognize us. You, O Lord, are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is Your name” (Isaiah 63:16). “Sing to God, sing praises to His name; lift up a song for Him who rides through the deserts, whose name is the Lord, and exult before Him. A father of the fatherless and a judge for the widows, is God in His holy habitation” (Psalm 68:4, 5).

God does not change, but our image of Him does as we move through the Scriptures. In the Old Testament, we see God’s majesty, power, might, and awesomeness. When you read the Old Testament, you can’t help but fear the Lord. When you read the account of Jehovah at Sinai, He is the God who speaks with sounds of thunder, earthquake, fire, and lightning. Cecil B. DeMille couldn’t do justice to that scene, even with today’s special effects!

Only when you turn to the New Testament does the picture of God as a Father who loves his children begin to unfold. In the Gospels, Jesus reveals the heart of God. He gives us a personal glimpse of a God who longs to be intimate with His children.

As you read this verse in Isaiah 9, I implore you to catch the significance of one man, scanning the horizon of the future, looking beyond himself and anything he has ever known, and making this pronouncement: “Eternal Father.” This is an incredible revelation. The God who is so holy that He would kill a man who entered the Holy of Holies with sin in his life now says to sinners, “Come on in. let’s fellowship together. I want to spend time with you. I care about your every concern.” This is no small concept to grasp. The only way Isaiah could have come up with this name is through divine revelation.

Before we go any further, I want us to examine these words in detail. The Hebrew word for father is “ab,” and the word everlasting is “ad.” Literally translated the words are “Father of Eternity.” The term expresses singularity. There can be only one Eternal Father.

The word “ab” is a primitive word and means father in a literal or figurative sense. It is used in the Old Testament as both the father of an individual and of God as the Father of His people. Figuratively, it is used of a producer, generator, or protector. It is a term of respect and honor.

Basically, it relates to the familial relationship. The first use of the word is in Genesis 2:24, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife.” In Deuteronomy 32:6, God is called the “father of Israel.” He is the One who begat and protected them, the One they should revere and obey.

Isaiah used the term as one of the Messiah’s enthronement names. It is incredible if you look at the word in the time in which it was used, that the Son of God would be given this title. The Son of God is the Eternal Father. He is the creator, originator, and producer of this world. Warren Wiersbe writes, “God created us for eternity, and Jesus Christ came to earth to reveal eternity.”

Jesus declared a oneness with the Father. The mystery of the Trinity is here. When people saw and heard Jesus, they were seeing and hearing the Father also. When the Spirit of God speaks to us today, we are hearing the voice of Jesus.

The Ancient of Days came at a point in time. The Creator came as a baby to redeem fallen man and restore him to a right relationship. In order to reveal His heart, God had to come to earth and make Himself known to man. He came not as an angel, but as the seed of Abraham.

Christ was born of a virgin; He was God with skin on. His life is studied to this day because of the magnificent complexity of it. Children love Him because He is accessible. Scholars stand in awe of Him because He is incredible. He was born, He lived, and He died. Yet He is the author of the eternal ages. A child once asked, "What is eternity?" The answer came, "It is the lifetime of the Almighty."

Jesus Christ is the Father of the children whom God has given Him (Hebrews 2:13). There was a great gulf fixed between God and man. Jesus Christ came to close the gap and fill the gulf. He is the Eternal Father who loves, protects, and provides for His children. The more we know about the heart of God, the more we understand the name "Eternal Father."

Father is the name Jesus most often used to describe Jehovah God. With dozens of Hebrew names to choose from, He chose "Father." He could have said, "Pray like this: Elohim... or Adonai... or Shaddai... or Jehovah..." Instead, He taught us to pray like this: "Our Father, who art in heaven..." He said, "Your Father knows the things you need." "Pray to the Father, and your Father who sees in secret shall reward you openly." "Your heavenly Father will also forgive you."

On every page, Jesus paints a picture of the Eternal Father. You see Him waiting for the prodigal to come home. You sense Him wanting to hear our concerns and needs in prayer. He calls us His children. We've been adopted into His family. We are no longer slaves but sons. No one can read the New Testament and fail to see the Father's care, concern, provision, and forgiveness. He even promises us an eternal home.

Take the time to read the following verses. Let the Holy Spirit affirm to your heart how much God loves you. Let these words from the sacred text remind you of the blessings that are in store for the children of the Eternal Father.

Then the King will say to those on His right, "Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matthew 25:34)

Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom. (Luke 12:32)

Let not your heart be troubled; believe in god, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. (John 14:1, 2)

All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said, that He takes of Mine, and will disclose it to you. (John 16:15)

Your Father has made some promises to you. Someday all that is of God in heaven and on earth will be my inheritance. It's written in the will. My Father told me I could count on it.

If you are a child of the King, then you have an Eternal Father. He is not a distant deity. He is in you. He hears you. He knows your every need. He is personally interested in what is going on in your life.

A few years ago, the Boston Globe interviewed Dennis Wise. Wise is an Elvis fanatic. Read these words from the interview:

I loved Elvis. I followed him his whole career. I have every album he has recorded and seen every movie he's made. I once even bought some boots when I was in junior high school that looked just like his. The kids called them "fruit boots." But I didn't care—they looked like Elvis.

Later, I even got a facelift and a hair contour like his. I have won Elvis look-alike contests and wanted him to notice, so I would storm the stage during and after concerts he would do. I don't even think he ever saw me. I have ticket stubs from concerts, Elvis clippings from programs all over the world, and even some Elvis pillows from Japan.

Yeah, Presley was and is my idol. My only regret was...that I never really saw him. . . . I mean really saw him. Sure I went to concerts, but there was no contact. I once even climbed the walls around Graceland, the Presley mansion, to catch a glimpse of him. I think it might have been him that was walking through the house as I was looking through my binoculars. But...I never really saw him. It's funny...all the effort I put into following him—and I never could seem to get close.

Jesus came so you could have an intimate relationship with the King of kings and Lord of lords. All the barriers are down. The ticket has been paid for. You have a backstage pass and the opportunity for a one-on-one conversation anytime you like. "His name shall be called...Eternal Father." Other people may let you down; He never will. He always delivers on His promises. He cares about the smallest details of your life. He is always patient, kind, forgiving, and gentle. He wants nothing but the best for you. He cares, and you can count on it forever and ever.

Give the Prince of Peace a Chance

Stephen Olford writes, “Of the five titles given to our Lord Jesus Christ this one is the greatest, for it speaks to the deepest needs of the human heart. The true Israelite sang and sighed for the coming prince of peace; but there will be no peace personally or generally until Christ is welcomed and enthroned.”

Open the paper, watch CNN, catch the evening news, scan the news magazines, and you’ll find wars, conflicts, tension, strife, and violence. The streets of the cities are filled with crime, hate, and injustice. Misunderstanding reigns between families, employers, and employees. The whites hate the blacks, the rich despise the poor, guys use girls, and girls manipulate guys. Abuse abounds. Hostility is on every corner in every town.

We pray for peace while our nation is armed for war. We sing about peace, but there’s very little to be found. Peace is a commodity that seems to be in short supply. Only the Prince of Peace can bring about the radical change necessary for “peace on earth.”

The five names given to Isaiah by the Holy Spirit are not repetitious; they each, as we have seen, have unique characteristics. They reveal different aspects and insights into the nature and character of God. We marvel at His works because He is wonderful. We seek His wisdom because He is the Counselor. We long for the protection of our Mighty God. We can rest in the arms of our Eternal Father. We must pray for the Prince of Peace to rule our hearts and lives.

Each name in Isaiah’s prophecy is significant. This last one is too often limited to the Christmas season. This limitation of understanding does injustice to the name. When Isaiah spoke these words nearly 3,000 years ago, his nation was on the verge of destruction. There were wars and rumors of wars on every hand. Captivity and bondage seemed just over the horizon. Israel would soon suffer under the Babylonian captivity.

Yet, as we read Isaiah, we see a ray of hope; a glimmer of light at the end of the darkness. “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14). “The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them” (Isaiah 9:2).

The Hebrew word for “prince” is “sar.” It refers to a head person, a captain that has rule, a chief, a keeper or governor or lord. The word could also mean an overseer. When used of God, it means Ruler of ruler.

So what does this Prince rule over? Peace. “Shalom.” This is a well-known Hebrew term. It was generally used as a greeting of the day, similar to our “hello.” But for the real meaning of the word you have to dig a little deeper. God promised Israel “peace in the land” in Leviticus 26. The psalmist said, “The Lord will bless His people with peace.” In its best sense, peace means completeness, soundness, or welfare. It is a term of contentment. It is used of God in reference to His covenant relationship with Israel. God is all over the word peace.

In the book of Daniel, we read of the “Messiah the Prince” (Jesus). Daniel also refers to another: “The people of the prince who is come will destroy the city and the sanctuary.” This other prince, whom John identifies as “the beast” in Revelation is no match for the Messiah the Prince. Scripture refers to Satan as the “prince of the power of the air” and the “prince of darkness.” He is no match for the Prince of Peace.

The promised Messiah will come and shatter every stronghold of the enemy. He is the overcoming Prince, the Mighty God who brings peace to a world in chaos and confusion. Jesus had to come, or there could never be any peace in this world of tribulation.

Into the midst of a world filled with hatred, uncertainty, and bondage, the Prince of Peace came. When Jesus Christ was born of the virgin, the world had a chance at peace for the first time. The day was now at hand when the second Adam would come to restore fallen man.

But not only is He the Prince of Peace; He is the Prince who *is* peace. He is our peace. In Christ, peace is personified and reaches its perfection. When Jesus said, “My peace I give unto you,” He was referring to Himself in the person of the Holy Spirit. Herbert Lockyer writes, “He alone was princely enough to be the purchaser and procurer of peace between God and man, between man and man, between Jew and Gentile.”

Paul, writing to the Philippians, gives us this insight into the Prince of Peace:

And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things. The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in Me, practice these things; and the God of peace shall be with you. (4:7-9)

This peace hinges on our prayers (v. 7) and our practice (v. 9). God’s peace within you is produced by what you dwell upon and what you practice. The peace of God is the product of His presence. The effect of His presence is that He will guard your heart. God’s peace isn’t just about relief; it is about protection. His peace will garrison itself over your heart.

Additionally, the God of peace will be with you. Not just a representation, but God Himself. The phrase is a description of the character of God. The repetition of thought here is not accidental. Paul, being a good rabbi, uses a common rabbinic teaching method to make his point. He makes essentially the same point, but looks at it from different angles. The force of the phrases “peace of God” and “God of peace” is the same, but the order and description of what is happening is different. The Lord is on the alert on our behalf.

In Ephesians 2, Paul wrote, “For He Himself is our peace...” It is Christ alone and no other that makes peace possible. Peter Bilhorn wrote of this truth in the hymn *Sweet Peace, the Gift of*

God's Love. Some think there is no peace outside the cemetery. The Scriptures teach that peace can be found in Jesus Christ. He is our peace.

In Colossians 3:15, Paul admonished, "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts..." Williams translates this, "Let the peace that Christ can give keep on acting as umpire in your hearts." Beck translates, "Let the peace of Christ be in your hearts to decide things for you." The New Living Bible paraphrases, "Let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts."

In Ron Dunn's classic book on prayer, *Don't Just Stand There, Pray Something!*, he writes concerning this verse:

Through Christ, the Christian has two kinds of peace; peace *with* God and the peace *of* God. Peace with God is the result of being justified by faith (Romans 5:1). The war between God and the Christian is over, and he has been brought into a right relationship with God, a place of blessing. Peace with God is objective. Every believer possesses this regardless of his spiritual status. Nothing can disturb our peace with God.

Then there is the peace *of* God. This is God's peace...the peace that he himself enjoys and shares with us. This peace is subjective—an inner calm and quite assurance of the heart. The peace of God is the believer's heart at rest. Stepping outside the will of God disturbs this peace; our heart becomes troubled, the quiet assurance disappears.

Paul is saying that we are to let the peace of Christ be the umpire in our lives, to let it decide what is right and wrong. When we lose that inner peace, when our heart is troubled and ill at ease, our spiritual umpire is blowing the whistle and calling a foul.

Paul wrote many of these words about peace from behind prison bars, knowing he could be put to death for his faith. Yet, he wrote often about peace. The Prince of Peace provided the old Apostle with an inward sense of security. It was a peace born of faith and trust in the promises of God.

The Old Testament prophet said, "You will keep Him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You because he trusts in You" (Isaiah 26:3). What must I do to have perfect peace? Trust in God. That's it. It's that simple. No hoops to jump through. No programs to follow. Simple faith. It is the promise of God to all who put their faith in His Son.

At His birth, the angels announced the advent of peace on earth. As the Prince of Peace lived out His ministry, He constantly reminded the disciples that He was the source and power behind all true peace. "Peace, be still." "Go in peace." "Peace be with you." Only the person of peace can offer true and lasting peace.

Life without a personal relationship to God through Jesus Christ is constant turmoil. There is no peace for the wicked. Those who place their trust in Christ know a peace that passes all understanding. God is the source of peace. Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, died to pay the penalty for our sin and to make peace between God and man.

Bob Mumford summarizes what the Word says about peace: “Peace with God brings the peace of God. It is a peace that settles our nerves, fills our mind, floods our spirit, and, in the midst of the uproar around us, gives us the assurance that everything is all right.” Where there is peace, God is. Peace rules the day when Christ rules the heart.

C. H. Spurgeon said:

Look upward, and you will perceive no seat of fiery wrath to shoot devouring flame. Look downward, and you discover no hell, for there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Look back, and sin is blotted out. Look around, and all things work together for good to them that love God. Look beyond, and glory shines through the veil of the future, like the sun through a morning’s mist. Look outward, and the stones of the field and the beasts of the field are at peace with us. Look inward, and the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keeps our hearts and minds by Christ Jesus.

Only the Prince of Peace can—and will—do that for you.

Notes

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