

Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.

Sunday November 28, 2021. "Advent (Hope). "What's in a Name: Wonderful Counselor"

I Intro.

Welcome to the weekly devotional that gives you some specific things to work through from the message this Sunday. Whether you were able to participate in this service or not, this devotion is free-standing and you can still use it to help you dig deeper into your own spiritual walk. We're now in the season of Advent and Christmas is just around the corner. We hope you will join us either in person or virtually as we celebrate this season. A great group of familiar and new faces join us each Sunday. Our children's, youth areas and coffee spot have been fully open also, and we're seeing a good response. We're so encouraged by your love and presence when you gather with us. If you're still joining us online, we love and so appreciate your presence also. We are 100% committed to our virtual attenders. We are your church family, and if there is ANYTHING you need, prayer, ideas or suggestions, please pass them our way. We know the future is still uncertain, but we are committed to making our virtual congregation as central to NCC as our in person group.

II Sunday.

Well...here we go. The final approach to Christmas. We're just four Sundays out, and it'll be here before we know it. And Sunday was the beginning of the season we call Advent. Pastor Larry returned, and did an excellent job giving us an understanding of why we celebrate this thing called Advent. Watching the service would be super informative, but basically Advent is the inner work of the preparation for the coming of Jesus, as we do the external work of getting ready for Christmas. And we lift up four themes for this time. Hope. Joy. Peace. And Love. So...just for fun.

How was your Thanksgiving?

What is your favorite thing about Christmas?

What will you be doing to get ready for Christmas?

Theme for this Advent series is; "**What a Name**", and looks at four names found in Isaiah 9 that describe the "*coming light*". Read **Isaiah 9:2-6** for the teaching and context about this first name.

What jumped out to you from this passage?

How important would a 'Wonderful Counselor' be in the time and environment of that time?

What could that mean to us today?

Today we hit the name **Wonderful Counselor**. Even though this is a combined term, not two different descriptions, we'll break this down a bit, and use that to build a more complete understanding when we combine the two words..

1. Wonderful- incomprehensible, beyond our understanding, awe inspiring. This is so much bigger than our current understanding. We don't save any words for things that are actually beyond really good. We've flattened words like; amazing, awesome, fantastic, love, and more. We call things that are just good these names. So when we use them for something that really is amazing,

awesome, it doesn't create the same feel as it should. Same with the word; wonderful. Wonderful means 'full of wonder', awe. Feel the bigness, not ordinariness, the name wonderful carries.

Name some things you believe, feel, are beyond ordinary and are 'wonderful'?

2. Counselor- advisor, continual source of priceless wisdom from knowledge and experience.

This is the person, source material, you've recognized the authority of as a source of truth. It's what/who you quote as truth when you talk about something specific. We all need some help turning to and seeking out wonderful counsel. We tend to give authority, credibility to sources that really aren't. A 'good' counselor will have a base foundation of understanding of human behavior at its deepest level. And your personal shortcomings. Really good counselors over the years, collect a huge body of understanding about human behavior and experiences relating to others. Those who counsel for a long time can become really good at seeing patterns and helping their client see them. So, a counselor is one who brings wisdom and experience that sees who we are, our blind spots, and what blocks growth, and will challenge and grow us to be better.

Name some people or sources that you find to be good counsel for you?

3. Wonderful Counselor. So, when you put Wonderful & Counselor together, you find an advisor, source of wisdom, insight, knowledge, that you will never find anywhere else. Imagine all wisdom, knowledge, collection of truths, all experiences, all ability to understand, see human behavior compiled in one super source. Maybe a... Wonderful, amazing, unlike anything else, Counselor, matchless source of wisdom, knowledge, and experiences. THAT would make it the most valuable thing ever. That idea is what we're 'naming' and lifting up today in the coming of the messiah.

So, how have you experienced a time, moment with God, you felt that reflected this idea of 'Wonderful Counselor'?

III Challenge.

All of these names will be pretty straight forward, but each gives us a great insight to a specific nature of God, "*if you've seen the son you've seen the father*", and a source of our hope. So, when we celebrate the coming of Jesus, the light, as the Wonderful Counselor, we are admitting the limitations of our own ability to understand. And creating a desire, and maybe first step, towards Jesus as the source of wisdom, light, and truth. To place him and continue to turn to him as the Wonderful Counselor.

So, on this first Sunday of Advent a few closing questions.

Where do you need some hope in your life?

Where do you 'feel' like sometimes you're living in the land of "deep darkness"?

How could a 'Wonderful Counselor' help you now?

Learn to lean on this understanding of Jesus and you will find hope and wisdom no matter what you may be facing.