

Mighty God

Welcome to Week 2 of our Christmas series that we are calling, **Gloom to Glory (A Promise of Hope)**. This is a 4 part series where we are examining one of the most famous Christmas passages that we find in scripture. **Isaiah 9:6** For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Last week we looked at 3 promises that Jesus gave us that proves that He is truly our Wonderful Counselor. If you missed last week, we would love for you to catch up on our Vertical App or on our Youtube page.

In chapter 9 in the book of Isaiah, the prophet was sent by God to speak a word of HOPE to the struggling nation of Israel. Not just a word of hope, but a word of assurance and above all that; He gave a promise! A promise that would change the course of history. A promise you and I are still standing on and holding onto today. A promise that is unchanging and is eternal! **A promise that takes us from "gloom to glory!"** If you have your Bible, turn with us to chapter 9 of Isaiah and I will pray for us before we jump in..

What if I told you that Christmas isn't to highlight the joys in our life, but to actually shine light in the darkness of our gloom! In scripture, Christmas does not appear when life is all put together, but actually presents itself in the midst of our darkness and our inability to get out of it on our own. Last week we asked you to re-evaluate what Christmas means to you? There are those who enjoy it because it brings about good feelings, but there are those who NEED it because it offers HOPE in a dark world.

Have you ever received a birth announcement through the mail? Opened your facebook and someone posted their baby for the first time? Usually, you'll see the baby's date of birth, its weight and length. Most importantly their name. What would you do if you opened up the envelope or opened up facebook, saw the announcement and the name was "Mighty God?" Would you be surprised, would you laugh, question it or say; how cute?

The name Mighty God is very audacious for us as humans to use, but God; He can name His Son whatever He wants. Often in the Old Testament, people were given names that described what God would do through them. Hezekiah's name meant "the Lord is my strength"; Isaiah's own name means "the Lord has brought salvation." Each name says something about what God will do or who God is. And so it is here. This child's name, we might say, is a kind of job description. This child will reveal the mighty God to Israel in a unique way and to us as well!

When you and I need hope, where do we turn to? Usually we turn to our bank accounts, people, facebook, or something that usually carries us deeper in the hole that we are already in. We call those idols. As Israel is struggling, walking in the darkness, hope is on the way. His name is Jesus, but Isaiah also says He will be called Mighty God! Mighty God means hero, champion. It means He is victorious!

Today, I want to look at how Jesus being our Mighty God takes us from a place of Gloom To Glory and brings us a promise of hope that you and I can still cling to even today. To do that, we wanna show you 3 displays of Jesus' power that proves that He is the Mighty God that Isaiah spoke of. The first display is He had **Power over life**

700 years after Isaiah gave Israel hope of a child coming, God did something that He had not done before. Can you imagine that? God doing something new! **He allowed humanity and glory to co-exist in the womb of a virgin.** You don't have to have a doctorate degree to know that it's physically impossible for a virgin to give birth. Yet, when God chose that it was time for the Messiah to arrive, He chose a virgin and did the impossible.

Luke 1:28-35, “28 The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.” **29** Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. **30** But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. **31** You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. **32** He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, **33** and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.” **34** “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?” **35** The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.”

God is a God of the impossible and He has shown on several occasions that He has that POWER! In fact, here is a list of some of His powerful displays: Dividing the red sea, David defeating Goliath, Daniel surviving the lion's den, and what about the 3 Hebrew boys in the furnace? God's power has always been in full effect, but on this occasion He was doing something different. The darkness of SIN and DEATH had taken over life on earth, and light was on the way and God chose Mary to bring forth the light.

If you've been a part of church for a period of time, you've probably heard the story of Mary giving birth to Jesus. During the Holiday season people have an opportunity to hear about the story of Jesus and His birth. Unfortunately, sometimes the story is told without addressing the personal impact of Jesus' birth and how it provides hope still today.

The virgin birth made it possible for Eternity to come to Earth.

John 1:1-5, “1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was with God in the beginning. **3** Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. **4** In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. **5** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”

We call this “Incarnation.” Incarnation is when the eternal Son of God took on human flesh; without losing any of His divine nature, He added a human nature. The virgin birth allows us to see Jesus being fully God and human at the same time. His physical body passed through Mary, but His eternal nature, holy as it was, was from eternity past. At the beginning of time the earth was formless and barren and dark, and Mary’s womb was just the same. **Jesus is powerful enough to bring life where there is none.**

Maybe this morning, your life is filled with many things, yet it’s barren of joy, dark and needs to be emptied. Jesus wants to fill all of your heart with His presence. When His presence enters, everything changes. Maybe you need hope today and the hope you’ve been seeking has kept you in darkness. The virgin birth brings eternity to earth, it gives us a promise of hope that even though we may see darkness, that darkness cannot overcome the light. What darkness in your life needs to see light? What are you hiding? What are you struggling with? What has drained the hope out of you? Know this morning that Jesus has the power to bring life wherever hopelessness is residing. **Jesus displays power over life!** Jesus also has **Power over creation**

Colossians 1:15-17, “**15** The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. **16** For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. **17** He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.”

This includes creation. What you see, and breathe. The mountains, oceans, desert, trees, flowers, you name it; He created it. The disciples got a firsthand experience with His power over creation.

The books of Matthew, Mark and Luke speak of a display of Jesus’ power over creation! We know some of the disciples were professional fishermen. We know they had much training and experience of being on the water. Yet, when they were surrounded by a storm that was great, they called out to Jesus!

Mark 4:35-41, “**35** That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” **36** Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. **37** A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. Panic probably set in, and sinking was the only thing they were worried about. Scared for their lives, yet Jesus is resting.

38 Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?” **39** He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. **40** He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” **41** They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

Professional fisherman scared of the waves, water entering the boat; panicking they called out! Jesus asleep, possibly yawns as He was awakened and simply tells the waves, **Quiet! Be still!** And the WATERS listened...Don't miss this! The disciples had seen the miracle of the man that was lowered from the roof by his friends, they saw the shriveled hand that was stretched out and heard the parables and messages. Yet, when the waves obeyed; they were astonished. They were left in awe!

With Jesus being our Mighty God, it should leave us in awe. It should leave us with the understanding that even if it feels as if we are drowning, Jesus can calm the waves. It does not mean Jesus will push the storm away, It means that He will take us through the storm to show us His power. To show us His authority. If He has POWER over creation what in your life is too big for HIM to handle? He is MIGHTY GOD!! **Jesus displays power over LIFE! Jesus displays Power over CREATION! And #3, Jesus displays Power over death!**

Crucifixion was a brutal punishment! The victim of crucifixion was first severely scourged or beaten, an ordeal that was life-threatening by itself. Then he was forced to carry the large wooden crossbeam to the site of the crucifixion. Bearing this load was not only extremely painful after the beating, but it added a measure of shame as the victim was carrying the instrument of his own torture and death. It was like digging one's own grave. When the victim arrived at the place of crucifixion, he would be stripped naked to further shame him. Then he would be forced to stretch out his arms on the crossbeam, where they were nailed in place. The nails were hammered through the wrists, not the palms, which kept the nails from pulling through the hand. The placement of the nails in the wrists also caused excruciating pain as the nails pressed on large nerves running to the hands. The crossbeam would then be hoisted up and fastened to an upright piece that would normally remain standing between crucifixions.

After fastening the crossbeam, the executioners would nail the victim's feet to the cross as well—normally, one foot on top of the other, nailed through the middle and arch of each foot, with the knees slightly bent. The primary purpose of the nails was to inflict pain. Once the victim was fastened to the cross, all his weight was supported by three nails, which would cause pain to shoot throughout the body. The victim's arms were stretched out in such a way as to cause cramping and paralysis in the chest muscles, making it impossible to breathe unless some of the weight was borne by the feet. In order to take a breath, the victim had to push up with his feet. In addition to enduring excruciating pain caused by the nail in his feet, the victim's raw back would rub against the rough upright beam of the cross. After taking a breath and in order to relieve some of the pain in his feet, the victim would begin to slump down again. This action put more weight on his wrists and again rubbed his raw back against the cross. However, the victim could not breathe in this lowered position, so before long the torturous process would begin again. In order to breathe and to relieve some of the pain caused by the wrist nails, the victim would have to put more weight on the nail in his feet and push up. Then, in order to relieve some of the pain caused by the foot nail, he would have to put more weight on the nails in his

wrists and slump down. In either position, the torture was intense. Crucifixion usually led to a slow, tortuous death. Some victims lasted as long as four days on a cross.

There were two reasons Jesus faced crucifixion (A earthly and heavenly one)

The earthly reason Jesus was crucified: **mankind is evil**. Wicked men conspired against Him, falsely accused Him and murdered Him. The leaders of Israel were envious of His following, they were mad because He called out their sin and they thought He was blaspheming by claiming Himself as the Son of God. All these were outwards reasons that were covering the inward reason which was their unbelief!

The heavenly reason Jesus was crucified: **God is good**. God had a plan to save sinners, and Jesus was the Lamb of God who came to take away the sin of the world. Even though the crucifixion was evil, the cross was the eternal plan of God. God allowed the conspiracy, the accusing, the trials and the murder to happen. God used the evil desires of men to bring light to the darkness. To bring the greatest promise of hope. SALVATION! We have all committed sins and went against our Father. We all are worthy of death. But God..He allowed Jesus to take our place.

The physical part of the crucifixion is nothing to overlook by any means, but the spiritual part for Jesus is where Him taking on the name Mighty God really comes into play. You see the crucifixion was a death sentence for many people, but no one outside of Jesus carried the sins of the world on His shoulders. Jesus' death was a perfect sacrifice that you and I could not do on our own. He died a death that you and I deserved!

Romans 8:1-4, "8 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, 2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."

Jesus' power over death offers us the gift of salvation. A free gift to us that came at a great cost! That's a promise of hope! That's a promise that can take you from a place of "Gloom to Glory" this morning.

Invitation:

What are you facing this morning that seems too big for you to deal with or to overcome? Remember Jesus is MIGHTY GOD! There is nothing that He cannot handle! No situation that is impossible for Him!

- **No sin or failure too big that He cannot OVERCOME!**

- **No hurdle or difficulty that we face that He cannot REMOVE!**
- **No distance between us and God that He cannot BRIDGE!**
- **No gloomy situation or darkness that He cannot DISPEL with the light of His GLORY!!**

Nothing!! And I mean nothing, can separate us from His love because He is MIGHTY GOD and He has power over life! He has power over creation! And He has power over DEATH!!

Have you given your life to HIM?

Have you taken your burden/your gloom/ your darkness and have you placed it at His FEET? Will you let the LIGHT of the WORLD Light up your LIFE?