

Encounter: The Wonderful Counselor

December 4<sup>th</sup> 2022

Life Center Church

**Call To Worship**

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.

**Isaiah 9:2-7 NIV**

2 The People walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. 3 You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder. 4 For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. 5 Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. 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. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing it and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The Zeal of the LORD almighty will accomplish this.

Now picture this, your 1<sup>st</sup> century Jew, under Roman occupation and all you've ever known is Roman rule, your grandfather before you? Babylonian rule, Roman guard's come by your place of business and make a mess, disrespect your home, demean your family and faith. But you go to Temple, and you hear this and it sounds like God's about to make mincemeat out of the Romans, you can't wait to get revenge, it's been

dark under roman occupation, you expect a the militant messiah but here comes along Jesus and he's on a completely other level. They were expecting a Messiah to the Jewish people, for a nation state, but Jesus came to set the entire world free from the bondage of sin and death.

This (revisiting verse 2) is one of those rare moments in the Old Testament where you can say in confidence, it's talking about you! Isaiah says "The People walking in Darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned" that my friends is us, the gentiles, we that had no path of redemption, no access to the throne of God, those who were completely on their own in the wilderness.

I was raised in the church, in a Spanish a/g church in Koreatown LA, I don't remember a moment of my life where I didn't know about God, or know about Jesus, or about the power of the Holy Spirit today. So I'm living proof that Christians never have anything go wrong ever, we're always 100% healthy right? Of course, we experience difficulties in life, I may not have known a life outside of the church but that's not to say that I'm not broken, or that the world around us is broken. I think of it as an extra bit of grace being raised in the church, that while we are aware of the darkness, it never really had a hold on us.

Story:

My mom was raised roman catholic, her entire childhood she was devout, day in and day out praying the rosary, dressing the saints, all the special things that needed to be done, she did. My dad was a backslidden Pentecostal a/g young adult, came to the US to a whole load of freedom after being raised by a very strict dad, forced to go to prayer meetings at 2 in the morning, not allowed to play soccer instead made to memorize

scripture and sit through 4-hour worship services 6 days a week. My dad pretended to be catholic when they got married in the catholic church.

One night my mom was praying her rosary, my dad said “you know you can pray directly to God, right? You don’t have to talk to Mary” She wasn’t happy about that! But this brought my mom to a crossroads, she loved God, she had done all the things required of her, but there was an itch, there was something else, a desire for a more personal relationship with Jesus. My mom says that when she encountered the gospel message that it was like a veil had been removed from her eyes.

### **1. Jesus Tore the Veil of Darkness**

There was a physical veil that was torn when Jesus died on the cross.

Matthew 27:51 says

At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The Earth shook, the rocks split, and the tombs broke open.

In the moment that Jesus gave his final breath on the cross, this veil was torn in two it symbolized that his sacrifice and the shedding of his blood was the atonement for sin. But what’s so special about this veil at this temple?

That was the veil that separated the holy from the unholy, the other side was literally called the Holy of Holies, we gentiles could never go there, even the high priests could only go in at certain times of the year, and even when they did, there was a chance that they could die!

Because the veil was torn, because Jesus made a way. We perceive Justice in today's culture was 100% given to us by Jesus Christ, Mercy and grace are not merited to anyone other than Christ.

## **2. Jesus Brings Institutional Change**

If you were to have lived in 1<sup>st</sup> Asia, you would have lived in a culture that had no regard for human life at any stage.

Someone steals an apple. They lose their hand. Someone can't take care of their newborn.

They leave it to die in the outskirts of the city, maybe someone would take the child as a slave or servant, but if they're sick?

Death was a normal part of entertainment, gladiators fought brutally to death, killer mobs were a normal part of society.

Remember the story where Pharisees nearly stoned a woman that was caught in adultery had Jesus not said, "He without sin may cast the first stone"? Even the man she was with had a stone in his hand.

and you may have heard of the account in the book Acts where Stephen, one of the first deacons for the early church is sentenced by the Sanhedrin, dragged out of town by a mob and stoned to death with the Approval of Saul (who became Paul).

Revisiting Isaiah 9, going into verse 18-20

18 Surely wickedness burns like a fire; it consumes briars and thorns, it sets the forest thickets ablaze, so that it rolls upward in a column of smoke. 19 By the wrath of the Lord Almighty the land will be scorched, and the people will be fuel for the fire; they

will not share one another. 20 On the right they will devour, but still be hungry; on the left they will eat, but not be satisfied...

That does not sound like a good time, yet that's the way of the world. That's the dog eat dog, Me first world, that consumes more than it produces!

James 1:13-15 NIV says,

13 When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; 14 but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and sin, when it is full grown, gives birth to death.

Violence still happens today. Sin is in the world, in our culture, in our lives. How do we get out of this? What is the solution? How is the wrath of the Lord Almighty be satisfied, how can the sin in our lives, and in our world be atoned? Where is our hope? Who will be our counsel?

The values that were predicated by the early church have permeated nearly every facet of culture, and some may say that things are getting worse, but it's no worse than the world that our Savior was born to. He came to a world where there seemed to be no hope, and where there is no hope, he is the Wonderful Counselor. He is that Mighty God.

For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgement of God rather than burnt offerings. Hosea 6:6

### 3. Jesus Desires For You to Know Him

#### **Hosea 2:16,19-20 NIV**

16 In that day, Declares the Lord, “you will call me ‘my husband; you will no longer call me, ‘my master. 19 I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion. 20 I will betroth you in faithfulness, and you will acknowledge the Lord.

The church is his bride, Jesus loves his bride. Because of His sacrifice we are covered in righteousness and justice, we encounter true love and compassion. That’s the end game, communion with our Mighty God.

I want us to revisit for a second a thought from the beginning of this message. The expectation they had at the time of who the messiah was, how he was supposed to be, in a sense was short sighted. Jesus went above and beyond! Like he didn’t just come for the Hebrew people, he came for the gentiles too, he didn’t come for the people that followed the law of Moses and the prophets a tee, he came for the ones that didn’t even know, and never even had a chance.

He didn’t come to rule over a nation in the middle east, he came for every heart, every mind, every soul.

#### **John 3:16-19 NIV**

For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in HIM shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they

have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. This is the verdict: light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

You may know of the Azusa Street Revival in 1906, it gave birth to our Pentecostal Movement. But have you heard of the Pyongyang Revival. In 1907 Korea, before the war, before north and south, revival had broken out. A Presbyterian Missionary William Blair from Salina, Kansas was preaching to Koreans that they needed to turn away from their traditional hatred of Japanese people, there had been deep conflict for generations.

This is an excerpt from the missionary's journal, as revival was breaking out in their prayer meeting.

"The sound of many people praying at once brought not confusion, but a vast harmony of sound and spirit, a mingling together of souls moved by an irresistible impulse of prayer. The prayer sounded to be like the falling of many waters, an ocean of prayer beating against God's throne. It was not many, but one, born of one Spirit, lifted to one Father above. Just as on the day of Pentecost. God is not always in the whirlwind, neither does He always speak in a still small voice. He came to us in Pyongyang that night with the sound of weeping. As the prayer continued, a spirit of heaviness and sorrow for sin came down upon the audience. Over on one side, someone began to weep, and in a moment the whole audience was weeping. "

The missionary wrote in his journal that even his own cook came and cried out!

Other reports tell that people were repaying old debts, thieves returning stolen things with interest, even those who didn't yet believe in Jesus were doing it, the entire city was impacted by the presence of God. Prayer meetings would go till 2am, would start at 5 am, By march of that year there were 2000 new Christians. By 1912 there were about 300,000. Today despite opposition, 100 years after their revival the church continues, and underground missionaries from China support them directly.

Jesus is the Wonderful Counselor, he is the mediator, he is the way the truth and the life. He stood with the early Church, he stands with the persecuted church today, He's here with us through sickness, health, through doubt, through worry and frustration. AND Only by Him can we find eternal life, only in Him we can find restoration, healing, and peace. He is the Wonderful Counselor; He is Mighty God. He brings light into the darkest of places.

**Resource:**

The Korean Pentecost and the Sufferings Which Followed by William Blair & Bruce F. Hunt

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