

Good morning! My name is Joe, and I am the Pastor here at Cornerstone. I want to welcome you and thank you for joining us in this Christmas season. If this is your first time here, I want to invite you to fill out our connection card. This is a way for us to get to know a little more about you and let us be able to connect with you. If this is home for you, you can use our app to check in and let us know you're here or fill out a prayer request so that we can be praying for you throughout the week.

It is good to be with you this morning. We are going to be continuing our sermon series for the Christmas season called 'What Child is This?' We have been focusing on the passage in Isaiah 9. It is a passage that is a prophecy about a child that is to be born. He will be a king and Messiah that will come for the salvation of the world. We know that this child is Jesus Christ.

In this prophecy Isaiah gives 4 roles or titles of this Messiah. These 4 roles are the things that we have been studying over that last few weeks and will finish next week for Christmas Eve. The Roles that Isaiah gives are Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace. We ask the question 'What Child is This?' in order to see how Jesus was the fulfillment of this prophecy being the savior of the world. He fulfills them in incredible fashion as the King and Messiah that Isaiah describes. Today we will be focusing on the role of Everlasting Father.

Our scripture where we find these roles comes from Isaiah 9:6. It is the theme for this series, but we will spend the majority of our time in the book of Psalm chapter 103. If you have your bibles go ahead and turn to the passage in Psalm, to follow along with us. If you do not have a paper bible and would like one, we have some available for you in the back. You can also follow along with us today on the app with the scripture and our sermon notes available to you there.

But before we dive in the teaching today, lets read the passage that is our theme this morning together which comes from Isaiah 9:6

### SCRIPTURE Isaiah 9:6

*"For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given;  
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,  
and his name shall be called<sup>[a]</sup>  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."*

This is the Word of the Lord  
Thanks be to God

### INTRO

When we consider this title of Everlasting Father, there are some that will have difficulty with this idea of God as Father. Even thinking of those in this room that grew up or have an image of a father,, that is to say the least less than ideal. The men that we had to fulfill that role, either biologically or through a vacuum of position. Some of them carried that title but they abused the authority that came with it. We may not have known it at the time, but the thought of seeing God, sharing the same title as those individuals, can be difficult or uncomfortable for some.

We first need to bring this discrepancy to the light. The first thing we have to consider when we think about this role of Father, especially when it comes to the lens in which we look at God and the Messiah being the Everlasting Father, we have to first acknowledge that...

**Humanity can, does and always will fall short of the character and nature of God.**

To tangibly grasp this reality is easier said than done. We can know it in our heads, but it is a completely different issue to address the problem in our hearts. We know that the human father that we had in this life, pales in comparison to our Heavenly Father. We know that in our heads, but in our hearts, we wrestle with the thought that God is our Father. When we are still uncomfortable with that title, it is evidence that we cannot disregard humanity and believe God is different. We still have the questions maybe even subconsciously, but we ask, what if God hurts me just like my Father did? What if God abandons me like he did?

That shows us that we view God through the lens of our earthly father. Asking questions like 'what if you are like him?'. Instead, what we are supposed to do, is the opposite. We are to look at our earthly father through the lens of our Heavenly Father. We look at them and see that is not what a father is supposed to be. By this instead of doubting God we are reassured and think 'I am blessed to have a heavenly father that is the opposite of that man'. Or on the positive side, maybe you had a great dad, but through the lens of our heavenly Father, we see that they were just a glimpse of our father in heaven.

This is where I want to state that this sermon is not going to quiet the uncomfortable feeling that we can have when we think about God as a father. It doesn't matter how good of a preacher I am, sermons are not going to change the heart of someone wrestling with this comparison. That is the beautiful thing about the tools that we have been given in resources like a good therapist. Someone to help us unpack and work through those harmful things in our past that distort this image of a father.

If that is you, we as a church partner with organizations like Living Hope Counseling center in Springfield. They are an organization that operates from a faith-based understanding of mental health and trauma. I will encourage you to take advantage of resources like that. If you would like more information on resources that can be provided to you, come and talk with me or Ian, who is a counselor at the center, after service and we can provide you with more information.

That being said, what this sermon is designed to do is provide us with the understanding. An insight to be fuel to drive the desire to change that lens in which we view God. God is perfect and holy in every way. Comparing him to an earthy representation can be a hinderance to experiencing the Father in the incredible ways that he has perfected that role in our lives. This morning I want us to not compare but understand God as father, and the ways that he sets the standard of love and care for us.

**BODY**

I know that many of us are familiar with this idea of God being called Father, but we need to make a distinction with this specific reference of Everlasting Father. Isaiah is talking about the Messiah as a role of Father. As he is writing these 4 roles of the king born as a child, he did not change subjects. Isaiah is not saying that the Messiah is Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God and then addressing a different person in the trinity, as Everlasting Father, and then coming back to the Messiah calling him Prince of Peace.

This is not Isaiah separating Jesus from the Godhead and it is not minimalizing the Son or comparing the Son to the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the Son of God.

When I use this term 'trinity', it is the understanding that God is one, but he is 3 persons existing as one God. Last week we referred to John 10:30 where Jesus said that he and the Father are one. God the

Father is also the Son, God the Son is also the Holy Spirit and The Holy Spirit is also the Father. They are one but each person within the trinity operates in different distinct capacities while also remaining the same.

God the Son, is God the Father but Isaiah is not making a reference to the dynamics of the trinity in this role of Everlasting Father. All four of these roles are describing the coming Messiah in the person and the reign in which this king will operate. Like in the other titles given that we have previously studied, when Isaiah refers to the Messiah as Everlasting Father it is addressing the origins of the Messiah as well as the dynamics by which he will operate as king.

Let's first talk about the implication of origin that comes from this title for the Messiah. Warren Wiersbe discusses that this use of the word 'father' in Hebrew, says that the Messiah is father, originator, or source of everlasting or eternity. In the same way that Satan is the father of lies. Defiance against the truth, originated from Satan, so eternity originates from the Messiah<sup>1</sup>.

This describes that the Messiah is the creator of time and the author of eternity<sup>2</sup>. We know that God the Father is described and defined as the creator, however the gospel of John shows us the unique dynamics of the trinity. Even though the role in the trinity of the Father is creator, everything that was created was created through the Son.

### **John 1:1-3**

*"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made"*

A God that creates time, space, and matter, and is said to exist in eternity, cannot exist within the structure they created, nor can he be bound by it. In order for God to be God he would have to exist outside of time, space, and matter. Isaiah 57:15 and John 4:24 says that God is spirit and therefore is not limited by the things we are limited to. If God were not outside of time, he could not be omniscient or all knowing. He would have no way of knowing what has happened and what will happen if he was bound within the structure of time, space, and matter.

Like we talked about when we discussed 'Mighty God', this indicates the divine nature of the Messiah. Where Jesus took on flesh and entered our frame of existence, he maintained his divinity because he is the origin of eternity. He, in his state of being, was, is and always will be. Which is why again, as we said last week, he is able to create a kingdom that will last forever. Unlike the Jewish expectation of the kingdom of David mentioned in Isaiah 9:7.

Where Isaiah indicates the origin of this child being the author of everlasting, the plain understanding of this king being referenced as father is a description of the dynamics of this king's reign.

When someone was king, they would claim that they are the father to the people that they ruled over. This was to say that they were responsible for the concern, and care or discipline of the people. This responsibility establishes the reverent response to him as king. This Messiah is to create this kingdom of

<sup>1</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Comforted*, "Be" Commentary Series [Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996], 38, Logos

<sup>2</sup> Rydelnik, Michael, and Michael G. Vanlaningham. *The Moody Bible Commentary*. Moody Publishers, 2014.

people from all nations where he is responsible for the concern of the helpless, care for the needs of the people and corrective discipline of them.

All of this warrants a reverent response to him. Not only will the Messiah do all of these things as a father and king, but it says that he is an Everlasting Father. That means that these things are never going to cease. His responsibility in concern, care and discipline will never end because it is everlasting. He is a father that will never abandon his responsibility to fulfill all of these things. The Messiah is a father forever.

This is a tall order and a big responsibility. He is a king that cares for the people so fully and completely, that we have no other choice but to respond to him with reverence and awe. Not out of obligation or command but out of the way that he rules, he is deserving of reverence and awe.

For us to understand how the Messiah is to achieve all of this, we have to look at the way the love of God is communicated and completed in Jesus. The perfect description of this is found in Psalm 103.

I want to read this Psalm for you. As I read it, look at the ways that author describes the things that God does. Looking at it especially with the lens as a king and father. Then we will talk about how these things are completed in the Messiah.

### **READ PSALM 103**

First the Messiah's attention and care is defined by his compassion. Verse 13 says that he is a father that shows compassion for his children. His children are defined as those that fear him. Compassion is a trait that can be something all of humanity is capable of. We can have compassion upon anyone that we may choose.

However, anyone that is a parent in this room knows, that compassion for your children is not a choice but an impulse. No matter how hard you may try, a father cannot love another child in the way that they love their own children. They can empathize with others, they can admire them, revere them, and even love them, but it will never be the same as the way a father cares for their own children.

So, when we talk about the love of God, it has to be from the perspective, not in love as a general term, but about love that he as a Father has for his children, not anyone else. The love that is described in this passage is how a human father is supposed to love, but because of sin, is incapable of doing so.

Because man will always fall short of the character and nature of God. What is so beautiful about this love that comes from God, is how this love is manifested through Jesus. Jesus as Messiah demonstrates this for us in the dynamics of the kingdom that he established through his death, burial, and resurrection. It is shown to us in three ways.

### **First, is in Forgiveness. Through Christ we are forgiven completely.**

Verse 3 says he has forgiven all our sins. Verse 4, He has redeemed our life from the pit. Verse 11 and 12 our transgressions have been removed. This is a complete forgiveness from the father through the Son, and that is an important detail, this forgiveness is through Jesus.

We have to remember that God is Holy and Just. This is not God dismissing, overlooking, or forgetting our sin. Verse 10 says He does not treat us like our sin deserves. Our sin is an act of rebellion against a holy God. If he is Just and Holy, sin cannot be overlooked. He cannot, does not and will never condone our sins and transgression. He cannot overlook our rebellion. This is a problem for us. Every single human being on earth, including myself, we are all guilty of sin, and God is Just God. Since He cannot overlook sin, the punishment for it has to be paid.

God remains just, because the punishment of our sin was laid on another. This child that Isaiah talks about, is coming through the grace of God. This child, grows up into a man that is completely free from sin. That punishment was laid on him as the spotless lamb that is sacrificed for the sins of the world. The forgiveness that we enjoy as believers is bought and paid for in blood. We are ransomed at a cost.

**Isaiah 53:5**

*“But he was pierced for our transgressions;  
he was crushed for our iniquities;  
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,  
and with his wounds we are healed.”*

God’s justice was satisfied in the sacrifice of Christ. Forgiveness from the Father, comes through the Son. We are not treated as our sins deserves because God the Father treated the Messiah with those transgressions, so that our sins will not be overlooked, but paid for. The punishment for them is satisfied and we are forgiven because someone else paid the price for them.

The forgiveness that we have, has been given, is not because we deserve it, again we are all guilty. We are forgiven and treated as such because of the care that the Messiah showed to us like a fatherly king. He completely removed the consequence of the sin we are guilty of.

Not only are we forgiven completely because of the care of this fatherly king, but the second way He demonstrates this care is that...

**He knows us deeply.**

Verse 14 says that he knows how we are formed. This intimate knowledge of his creation is unique to our God. He knows our habits, the desires of our hearts, and every decision that we will ever make because he is omniscient. He knows how we were formed, knows our beginnings but he also knows our end. This life on earth is temporary.

It's like that old saying, there are 2 things that are constant, death and taxes. In our late-night philosophical thought spirals, we will contemplate the meaning of life, attempt to discover our purpose or maybe what it is we are going to leave behind when we are gone. For some this can even be a crisis.

In the present, millennials, my generation, our sense of purpose is found in careers that help us feel like we are making a difference. For Gen X and boomers, it was found in a selfless need to provide for your families. As a result, especially in men, they will reach their 40’s and think about how they hardly did anything for themselves. So they have a midlife crisis, they get a tattoo, sports car, or motorcycle to have some sense of feeling alive. Most of the time they have no business doing any of those things.

When we have these thoughts about purpose and legacy, we will form entire worldviews around them. Where we will fall short in these worldviews, is they often do not answer three very important questions that should be the basis for how we operate in this world.

Those questions are: Who am I? Where did I come from? And Where am I going? If your worldview cannot answer those questions, it is time to change your worldview.

When we can finally grasp this idea of the Messiah as the king who is an Everlasting Father, we find our purpose in Him. When we can believe that He knows us deeply, we confidently understand that I am not just a number, I have a father and He knows my name, I am not worthless, and neither are you.

**When we come to terms with this Everlasting Father, we know that we are created BY God and FOR God.**

It doesn't always feel that way, does it? We don't always feel confident in the assurance that we are known by God, or we can feel forgotten. When we feel that, we will drown ourselves in distractions to keep us from thinking about it. This is a result of the earthly lens on a Heavenly God. The brokenness that we feel is not because anything about God has changed.

#### **Hebrews 13:8**

*"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."*

That brokenness we feel in that relationship is because of our sin. When we battle with our flesh, and we let it win, we feel the reality of that separation from Him. He does not change so if our relationship with Him changes, that's on us. Thankfully God knows that about us too, because His knowledge of our lives and our heart, is deep.

Dwelling on that, we are reminded of the first point. Through Christ we are forgiven, and we can win the battle against our flesh through Christ. In our struggle, God knows us and wants that relationship with us, so he did something about our sin in Christ. He sent the Messiah to be the righteousness for the unrighteous that brings us in relationship with the God that knows us so deeply. In this everlasting Father there is forgiveness, there is freedom and there is a family in his church which is his body.

For some in this place, just like a focus on God can be a redemption of the title of father, these people can be the redemption of that role of family. This is the family that you should have had. Not that everyone in the church is perfect, but that we all should be striving in relationship for the one that is perfection. The people that have placed Christ as the Lord over their lives should be to the role of family, as a positive earthly dad is to the role of father. They should be the glimpse of what family should be. They are being sanctified to be the bride of Christ, and as a church family, we get a window of the depth of relationships that we will experience in heaven. This is because we are under the reign of the Everlasting Father that forgives completely, Knows us deeply and also...

**He is a God that loves us endlessly.**

Verse 8 says, he abounds in love. This word 'abounds' is to 'overflow'. John tells us that God is love<sup>3</sup>. It is something that overflows from him, and out of him, because that is who he is. We realize that what we

---

<sup>3</sup> | John 4:8

deserve, we will not receive, because of a love that is provided through a Savior that is Messiah who is Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God and Everlasting Father.

Verse 17 says that from everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those that fear him. This love to us, is a covenant. We talk about it whenever we take communion. It is the new covenant in Christ blood, where his body was broken as an atonement for our sins. It is a covenant where God took the initiative, Christ entered into it willingly, and binds himself to a people that are his own. We enter this covenant with him through repentance and faith.

For those who have had a terrible family life, this is a love that you have never experienced before. Even those that had a great family, you have only ever gotten a taste of this kind of love that comes from the Everlasting Father.

Even in this idea of the church being a redemptive family, there are those that have been burned by the body that claims to know this love but does not show it. They have been hurt by brokenness, scandals and abuse. Sin has hurt you and you felt it in the body that claims the name of Christ.

Even in the secular culture, human beings strive for this endless love. Like Lionel Richie and Diana Ross singing about "my endless love". Or Randy Travis singing "I'm gonna love you forever and ever, forever and ever amen". No matter how much we desire and crave it we will never find it in humanity. That disappointment that we gather from people cannot become the weights and measure that is used to determine if God is capable of an endless love that humanity claims but cannot practice.

Human beings will always fall short of the character and nature of God. Thankfully it is not in humanity that we find salvation. The church and the people in it are seeking after the same thing as you, the salvation from their sin and life in the endless love of God.

We can never fully experience from mankind is this kind of love that forgives completely, and knows you deeply. Which is why we will often face disappointment from the church. They should be the redemption of family absolutely, but they cannot be held to the same standard or perfection as God, nor should they be given zero standards like with the world. We as believers in the church struggle with the balance of it. We maintain the perspective of redemption but the understanding of God is perfection and humanity is desiring it. A desire only satisfied in Christ but tasted in the church.

God is the only one capable of an endless love. This is an endless love, that is completely selfless and is one that seeks you out. This is the love that has 99 sheep that are in the pasture but leaves to find the one that wandered away. This is the love that comes from a father that longs for the return of the prodigal son.

### GOSPEL

This is the story of the Gospel.

Prior to experiencing the Everlasting Father, we go through our lives pursuing whatever our flesh desires. We seek to satisfy our deep-seated selfishness to find fulfillment in anything other than the God that created us. Maybe not intentionally but in ignorance. That same God that we have chosen to ignore comes looking for you.

The loving God that pursues you so that you can have a relationship with him. Not because we are special, not because we have done anything to deserve it. Not because we have sought after him, but he is the God that seeks after me because he loves me and created me. He pursues us in love because that is who he is.

Because He is a God that has kept us and pursues us, He deserves that reverence and awe. In that reverence we strive in this life to be what he has made us to be. So that when our deadline comes, when we have met our end, we do not worry about what we leave behind, or the difference that we have made. We come to that end knowing we have believed and will live with the Everlasting Father and we will be loved by Him forever and ever, amen. He is my endless love.

If we want to know that Love. If we want to experience the care of this king that is the Everlasting Father over those in his kingdom, we must trust Christ.

If we choose not to, if we choose to reject this loving God, we will find there is no salvation in anything else.

We will lead a life that is empty and void of the satisfaction of the answers to life's questions. Who am I? Where did I come from? Where am I going? We will die with an emptiness. In the eternity after death, we will be cursed and separated from him forever. He is the author and perfecter of our faith, and he is the creator of eternity, the only appropriate response is reverence and awe.

### APPLICATION

Jesus's unending love for us should be an ever-present reminder that he will watch over us both now and forever. The everlasting status of Jesus's rule is not something created after the resurrection. If we take seriously the Scriptures, and how they inform us as to the true person of Jesus, then we can see that his ruling over us now, is just the overflow of how he has always done it. The kingdom that is outlined in Psalm 103.

Charles Spurgeon says this about Jesus as Everlasting Father and our confidence in him: "No language can more forcibly convey to our minds the eternity of our Lord Jesus. Nay, without straining the language, I may say that not only is eternity ascribed to Christ, but he is here declared to be the parent of it. Imagination cannot grasp this, for eternity is a thing beyond us; yet if eternity should seem to be a thing which can have no parent, be it remembered that Jesus is so surely and essentially eternal, that he is here pictured as the source and Father of eternity. Jesus is not the child of eternity, but the Father of it. Eternity did not bring him forth from its mighty bowels, but he brought forth eternity. Independent, self-sustained, uncreated, eternal existence is with Jesus our Lord and God"<sup>4</sup>

The Father that we have in Christ, is the perfect embodiment of the Father we never had, got a glimpse of growing up or the parent that we strive to be. He is a Father that is perfect. He is a reigning and ruling king that comes from eternity. He sits on His throne for eternity. He is a Father that is all powerful, all knowing outside of time, space and matter and is sovereignly in control of everything. He is all of those things, yet he cares for you like a Father. He forgives completely, knows you deeply and loves you endlessly.

---

<sup>4</sup> Charles Haddon Spurgeon, "His Name—the Everlasting Father," *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* 12, no. 724, 677, <https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/his-name-the-everlasting-father/#flipbook/>



**When you know this and believe it you will realize you were made according to the plan of the Wonderful Counselor, you will be changed by the power of the one that is Mighty God and you will thrive in the endless care of the Everlasting Father to each one of his adopted children.**

Know it, believe it, and live it. Because he is forever a Father that cares for you and will not abandon his responsibility in his covenant to do so.

**PRAYER AND REFLECTION**

**COMMUNION**