

The Prophetic Names of Jesus

12-3-25

Wonderful Counselor

I. Announce:

- A. Welcome to those **online!!!**
- B. **Slide1 Christmas Eve Services:** 1, 3, 5:00pm. all church service.
- C. **Slide2 Women's Christmas Celebration:** ladies this Sat at 9am-11am, followed by a craft boutique in the gym.
- D. **Slide3 Church Prayer:** Join us **next Sunday** at 1:30pm in the Agape Room.
- E. **CFLC:** Don't forget to *bring your gifts back* to the church by Sunday.
- F. **Slide4 Prayer:**

II. Intro: Wonderful Counselor

- A. To complement our *Sunday Christmas Series* we are doing “**The Prophetic Names of Jesus**” for the 3 Wed nights leading up to Xmas.
 - 1. Focus: **Who Jesus is**, through His *prophetic names*.
- B. We are starting with *Wonderful Counselor* giving us *a Christ-centered focus* that I believe connects beautifully with *a weary world heading into Christmas*.
- C. **Background of Isaiah:**
 - 1. The book of Isaiah is a miniature Bible. 1st 39 chapters (39 OT books) are filled with *judgment* because *mankind sinned*. The final 27 chapters (27 NT books) is a message of *hope* and *promise* and a **Messiah**.
- D. **Slide5a Background of Isaiah 9.**
 - 1. Show map of Assyria. (Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, top of Egypt)
- E. **Slide5b - Read** Isaiah 9:1-2, 6. [ch8 *Assyrian Invasion*. - Zebulun, Naphtali *would feel the wrath of Assyrian invasion 1st. But later it would be glorious* - Galilee, way of the Sea/Capernaum]
- F. C.S. Lewis's claim in *Miracles*, The **Incarnation** is the greatest miracle (greater even than **creation**).

1. **Creation** was an act of **God's power**, **but** the **Incarnation** is an act of **God's humility, condescension, and relational love**.
2. **Creation** is God speaking the world into being.
Incarnation is God stepping into the world He made.

G. Outline of 5 Questions.

III. Slide6 1 HOW WOULD A JEWISH AUDIENCE HAVE UNDERSTOOD WONDERFUL COUNSELOR?

A. **Wonderful** (נִפְלֵא / pele) - language used for God's **miraculous acts**.

1. To the Jewish imagination, *pele* was not a word used lightly. It's used for:
 - a) God's redemptive wonders. (Egypt). God's supernatural wisdom. (Judges 13:18 Manoah asked angel name, *Why do you ask my name, seeing it is Wonderful?*) NLT *Why do you ask my name? the angel of the LORD replied. It is too wonderful for you to understand.*
 - b) **Wonderful** - beyond comprehension. *Superhuman. Incomprehensible, extraordinary.*
 - c) He refuses to tell his name ... which shows *mystery and power*.
But He did say ... *but its pretty Wonderful!* Maybe alluding to what Isaiah would say in our text, His name is **Wonderful counselor**.
2. This term marked something **beyond human capability**. It was wisdom or action that could only come from **Yahweh Himself**.
 - a) So hearing that a **child** will carry *pele* would stop the Jewish listener in their sandals. *It signals divinity, not just gifted leadership.*

B. **Counselor** (רִצְיָן / yo'ētz) - more than advice; a wise, strategic, protective guide.

1. **In Hebrew culture, a counselor was:** The king's inner-circle strategist (e.g., Ahithophel). **The keeper of the king's heart, plans, and direction. A source of stability, guidance, and protection.**
 - a) It implied *presence, advocacy, and wise structuring of life* - **NOT** distant instruction.

- C. So to a Jewish audience: Isaiah is saying that **the Messiah** will bring **God's miraculous, divine wisdom** in a *deeply relational, stabilizing, presence-filled* way.
- D. **Slide7 Question:** So what would a first-century Jewish listener hear when Isaiah called the Messiah *Wonderful Counselor*?

IV. Slide8a **2 WHY DOES GOD DESCRIBE THE MESSIAH AS A COUNSELOR?**

- A. Because Israel's deepest wound was not merely *political oppression*, but *relational disorientation*.
- B. In Isaiah's time: **Kings failed** (4 from Judah). Leaders gave foolish counsel (Isa. 9:16a *for those who guide this people have been leading them astray*). People sought answers from mediums instead of God (Isa. 8:19). The nation lived in fear, confusion, and shadow of death/deep darkness (9:2b).
- C. **Slide8b** God responds not first with power, judgment, or military strength but w/ ...
 * **A Person** who will *come close enough* to **counsel**.
 * **A King** who will *restore the inner world*, not just the outer world.
- D. So, God meets *human chaos* not with distance, but with *empathic, wise presence, and with counsel that holds, guides, and heals*.
1. It reveals a **God** who values *being known*, not merely obeyed.
- E. **Slide9 Question:** So why did God send a **Counselor** to Israel instead of a conqueror?

V. Slide10a **3 WHAT DOES THIS REVEAL ABOUT GOD'S RELATIONAL HEART?**

- A. **God leads by coming near, not by shouting from afar.**
1. **Counselor** implies - *Proximity. Attachment. Availability*.
2. In other words: **God is not embarrassed to join you in your confusion.**
- B. **God does not despise your need for guidance.**
1. In human culture, needing counsel is a sign of weakness. ;([I actually see *strength*. I see *emotional intelligence*!]
 But **God** seems to say: "*Your need is where I delight to be your God.*"

C. **God does not rescue by *force*; He rescues by relationship.**

1. Power without counsel would **crush**. Counsel without power would **fail**.

a) The Messiah brings both - **but** *begins with* **counsel**. The gentle touch *before* the mighty arm.

D. This is actually the heart of **attachment**: A **God** who wants to be *experienced*, **not just acknowledged**. - **God** is our Ultimate secure **attachment** ...

Eg. *Under His wings, you find Refuge. I will never leave you nor forsake you. ABBA, Father.*

1. **Secular attachment theory** can lean toward (your early caregiving determines your destiny). **Christian counseling** pushes back on that. **It says**: People are more than their childhood story. **Slide10b** God can *re-parent, restore, and reshape*. The **Holy Spirit** produces new patterns that aren't bound to the past.

E. **Slide11 Question**: What does it say about God *that* He chooses to **guide us up close** instead of fixing us from a distance?

VI. **Slide12 4 HOW DOES THIS SPEAK INTO ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS?**

A. Advent is the season of waiting, longing, hoping - and Isaiah 9:6 is spoken into **darkness**: *The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.*

1. **Advent** is not merely *counting days* to Christmas; it is: **Sitting** in the darkness long enough to feel your need. **Naming** the confusion you can't fix. **Admitting** your heart requires a Counselor who is both *gentle* and *strong*.

2. **Advent** is an invitation to receive **Jesus** as the Counselor of *the places you don't know how to manage*.

B. If you tend to spiral. **When** shame whispers old scripts. **When** relational wounds shape reactions. **When** your feeling too young and too scared. **When** you long for someone wise enough to guide, **but** tender enough to stay ... **Then Jesus** enters that place - *not with condemnation but with Wonderful Counsel!*

C. Slide13 Question: Where in **my life** am I waiting for the Wonderful Counselor to enter **my darkness** and **guide me** this Christmas?

VII.Slide14 5 WHAT CAN YOU HOLD ONTO THIS CHRISTMAS?

A. Picture of a Christmas tree stand w/3 **anchor points** - I'll leave you w/these:

1. You are not expected to navigate **your inner world** alone.
 - a) You were created for **counsel**, for **guidance**, for **presence**.
 - b) **Jesus** is not ashamed of *your need*.
2. God's wisdom is not cold direction - **it's warm, relational guidance**.
 - a) **He** counsels **as one who knows** *every fear, every shame story, every longing*.
3. The Messiah came not only to Save but to **Shepherd**.
 - a) **Not only to redeem** but to **reorient**. **Not only to forgive** but to **restore** the inner map.

B. **Advent** is the season where God says, *I am coming near again, not as a judge but as your counselor*.

C. **Prayer: Jesus** - *Wonderful - Supernatural - Extraordinary Counselor*.

Enter my **confusion** with Your **clarity**. Enter my **fear** with Your **steadiness**.

Enter my **shame** with Your **gentleness**. And Enter my **longing** with Your **presence**.

D. Keywords: Counselor, Messiah, relational.