

**Christ for the Crisis**  
**A Wonderful Counselor**  
**Isaiah 9:6, John 14:16-26**

**December 2, 2018**

**Dr. Steve Horn**

**Introduction:** We return to the book of Isaiah this morning. With the exception of a few Sundays here and there for special emphases, we have been in the book of Isaiah in this latter part of the year. We are considering this book from the general theme of “Crisis,” because it is a prophetic message from a time of crisis in Isaiah’s day, focused on the nation of Israel and more precisely, Judah. To this point, we have examined the *Confrontation that Comes from Crisis*, the *Comfort for our Crisis*, and the *Challenges in the Crisis*.

We return today to Isaiah 8 and 9 for background, then highlight a wonderful verse that will serve as a launch point for us to re-examine one of the most powerful Christmas texts that is in the Bible. Another preacher (James Merritt) called this verse the “centerpiece of all prophecy.”

Let’s start back in chapter 8, verse 18, because I think you will see a stirring contrast of the world without Christ and the world with Christ.

**Isaiah Text:** Here I am with the children the LORD has given me to be signs and wonders in Israel from the LORD of Armies who dwells on Mount Zion. <sup>19</sup> When they say to you, “Inquire of the mediums and the spiritists who chirp and mutter,” shouldn’t a people inquire of their God? Should they inquire of the dead on behalf of the living? <sup>20</sup> Go to God’s instruction and testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, there will be no dawn for them.

<sup>21</sup> They will wander through the land, dejected and hungry. When they are famished, they will become enraged, and, looking upward, will curse their king and their God. <sup>22</sup> They will look toward the earth and see only distress, darkness, and the gloom of affliction, and they will be driven into thick darkness.

**9** Nevertheless, the gloom of the distressed land will not be like that of the former times when he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali. But in the future he will bring honor to the way of the sea, to the land east of the Jordan, and to Galilee of the nations.

<sup>2</sup> The people walking in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
a light has dawned  
on those living in the land of darkness.

<sup>3</sup> You have enlarged the nation  
and increased its joy.  
The people have rejoiced before you  
as they rejoice at harvest time  
and as they rejoice when dividing spoils.

<sup>4</sup> For you have shattered their oppressive yoke  
and the rod on their shoulders,  
the staff of their oppressor,

just as you did on the day of Midian.

<sup>5</sup> For every trampling boot of battle  
and the bloodied garments of war  
will be burned as fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup> For a child will be born for us,  
a son will be given to us,  
and the government will be on his shoulders.  
He will be named

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup> The dominion will be vast,  
and its prosperity will never end.  
He will reign on the throne of David  
and over his kingdom,  
to establish and sustain it  
with justice and righteousness from now on and forever.  
The zeal of the LORD of Armies will accomplish this.

### **Transition to Focus on Wonderful Counselor:**

Isaiah 9:6 is the background for this series of messages throughout the Christmas season. Isaiah prophesied about Jesus, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called **Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

I believe that God intends that we experience all that Jesus came to be in our lives. So, for the next four weeks, we are going to consider each of these descriptions in turn. We have been focused, for this study on Isaiah, on the idea of crisis. Well, here is the crescendo of our study. Where do we find our ultimate hope for whatever our crisis is? We find that hope in Christ. We find our hope in crisis in that He is the Wonderful Counselor the midst of our crisis. We find our hope in that He is Mighty God for our crisis. We find our hope in that He is our Everlasting Father in the crisis. All others may fail us, but the Eternal Father will not fail us. And, until the crisis is over, He will be the Prince of Peace.

The first designation is "Wonderful Counselor." Now, perhaps a word is in order about the putting together of the words Wonderful and Counselor. Some of the translations of the Bible have a comma separating the two words, thus leading some to see these as separate titles. I believe that the words should be taken together as are all the other phrases in this verse.

To help us to understand each of these titles, we will turn to another passage of Scripture. Today, we turn to John 14:16-26.

**Text:** And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever. <sup>17</sup> He is the Spirit of truth. The world is unable to receive him because it doesn't see him or know him. But you do know him, because he remains with you and will be in you.

<sup>18</sup> "I will not leave you as orphans; I am coming to you. <sup>19</sup> In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me. Because I live, you will live too. <sup>20</sup> On that day you will know that I am in my Father, you are in me, and I am in you. <sup>21</sup> The one who has my commands and keeps them is the one

who loves me. And the one who loves me will be loved by my Father. I also will love him and will reveal myself to him.”

<sup>22</sup> Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it you’re going to reveal yourself to us and not to the world?”

<sup>23</sup> Jesus answered, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.<sup>24</sup> The one who doesn’t love me will not keep my words. The word that you hear is not mine but is from the Father who sent me.

<sup>25</sup> “I have spoken these things to you while I remain with you. <sup>26</sup> But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you.

### **Who is This Wonderful Counselor?**

Jeannot Plessy was a pastor’s wife in New Orleans. She had just returned from a time of ministry in Samoa. On Tuesday night, while she was dropping off her grandchildren at her daughter’s home in the Gentilly neighborhood of New Orleans, she became the victim of a carjacking. When her son-in-law rushed to help her, the carjacker ran over Plessy. She died as the result of those injuries.

Pastor Dennis Watson of Celebration Church in writing to his church family about the incident said what we all think in these moments. “Such tragedies cause us to become overwhelmed by sadness and grief. We wonder, ‘Why do such tragedies happen to good and godly people in our world?’ Most of the time, there are no answers to that question.”

But, for these times, especially for these times, I am comforted to know that we have Christ for the crisis, and He is a Wonderful Counselor.

John 14:16 refers to the Holy Spirit as the (in Greek) *paracleton*. This Greek word comes from two Greek words—**Para** which means alongside of and **Kaleo** which means to call. Put these two words together and we discover that the Holy Spirit is the one who has been called alongside of us.

Back in Isaiah 9:6 Jesus is prophesied as a Wonderful Counselor, literally a wonder of a Counselor. There is no one like Him.

### **How Does the Holy Spirit Serve as our Wonderful Counselor?**

#### **3 Ways:**

##### **1. Godly People**

- Psalm 1:1 “How happy is the one who does not walk in the advice of the wicked or stand in the pathway with sinners, or sits in the company of mockers!”

This verse in Psalm gives us a progression of what happens when we rely on the wisdom of the world. First, we walk with them, then we stand with them, and eventually we sit with them. The reverse can be true as well. The more we are around the counsel of Godly people, the more likely we are to be influenced by their wise and Godly counsel.

You need to build people around you either in either a very organized way or a spontaneous way who will be honest with you—who will tell you that they disagree with you and lovingly give you counsel.

## 2. God's Word

Even as necessary as Godly people are in your life, there is something greatly more important. That is God's Word.

- Psalm 19:7-8
  - The instruction of the Lord is perfect.
  - The testimony of the Lord is trustworthy.
  - The precepts (statues) of the Lord are right.
  - The command of the Lord is radiant. (gives light)
- Psalm 119:105
  - Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light to my path.
- 2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching.

## 3. God Himself

In addition to Godly people and God's Word, we have God, Himself. With God, we see that...

- No Appointment is necessary (John 14:16)
- He is Able to empathize with our weaknesses. (Hebrews 4:15)

For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin.

- He has All Knowledge (Romans 11:34)

<sup>34</sup> “ For who has known the mind of the LORD?  
Or who has become His counselor?”

### **So What? How Should We Respond to the Wonderful Counselor?**

#### 1. **Get to know Him (John 14:17)**

We get to know Him by spending time with Him in worship, in prayer, in Bible reading. You cannot wait to get to know Him when the crisis comes. Get to know Him before the crisis.

#### 2. **Trust Him (John 14:18)**

#### 3. **Obey Him (John 14:19-25)**

#### 4. Listen to His Counsel (John 16:13)

However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

I have heard it said before that, in reality, most of us don't want to know God's will to do God's will, but to consider doing God's will.

The story is told that an atheistic colleague was visiting C.S. Lewis at Christmas. While they were visiting in Lewis's office, they began to hear from outside carolers singing. As they sang about the virgin birth, the colleague said to Lewis, "Isn't it good that we know now that virgins don't have children?" C.S. Lewis responded by saying, "Don't you think that they knew that virgins didn't have children?" I mean that's the point, isn't it? The very supernatural-ness of the entry of this child into the world is a testimony to the wonder of his person. As I heard someone recently say, "Thousands of babies have become kings, but only one KING has become a baby." His person is miraculous and supernatural. He is God in the flesh and so His person is wondrous. He is a wonderful Counselor! And He can be your wonderful Counselor!

Maybe you are going through something similar to what the Plessy family is going through in New Orleans. Or you will soon. Jeannot's mother, also a believer, said, "I don't know how people go through tragedies like this without the Lord and God's people to help them."

I don't know either. I'm just glad to know that we can celebrate Him as the Wonderful Counselor!