

"...He will be called:
Wonderful Counselor
Everlasting Father Mighty God
Prince of Peace!"

Isaiah 9:6

What a name!

*First name: **Wonderful**. Last name: **Counselor**. What comes to your mind when you hear "counselor"? An attorney or mediator? A therapist or friend? That compassionate one who listens, understands, offers wisdom and direction?*

ABOUT THEM:

I wonder what the people of Israel thought when they heard this name of their Messiah? On top of that, he would have three other names—*what??*

Isaiah was a prophet, one who heard a message from God and relayed it to the people. Here is this man, teaching about Jesus 800 years before Jesus ever comes on the scene. You'll find it interesting that the name, Isaiah, actually means "the salvation of the Lord". When we read the story of the Israelites, we see these people were naturally self-destructive. They were desperately in need of salvation!

And that is what Isaiah promises in Jesus Christ: salvation. The people were living in spiritual darkness, heading toward death. One of the sins about which Isaiah had been speaking to the people was the practice of consulting mediums and spiritists for advice—they were hearing advice, but they were not receiving "wonderful counsel". Have you been given less-than-wonderful advice?

Jesus would bring salvation, be a bright light shining on a life-giving path. Spiritually speaking, the oppression of the Israelites' lives was about to be lifted, and by following the way of Jesus, the Israelites would come into a life of freedom:

what Jesus had to offer would save them from death and profoundly change their lives!

ABOUT YOU:

- Does life sometimes lead you down a dark path?
- Do you find yourself oppressed by circumstances, by another person, by your own dark thinking patterns?
- Do you need someone to shine a bright light into your darkness?
- Do you need your path to be illumined so that you know your next step?

If you can relate, you need a **Wonderful Counselor**!

ABOUT HIM:

There's an interesting observation in Isaiah's introduction of Jesus Christ: "...a child is born to us, a son is given to us..."

It is significant that he uses two descriptions to introduce this One to us. Scripture teaches Jesus, Son of God, left heaven and came to earth as fully God (son), fully man (child). During his thirty-three years on earth, Jesus Christ held a dual nature: all the characteristics of



God AND all the characteristics of human beings. We are not talking about personality here—we are referring to both divine and human natures. Jesus was all God and all human, both natures working in tandem during his lifetime here on earth. In the stories of Jesus' life, we see:

- When he experienced weakness in his human nature, he would pull strength from his divine nature.
- When Jesus didn't have the sure answer in his human mind, he would pray for wisdom from his divine mind.
- When Jesus was tempted to make a choice leading to spiritual death or darkness, he sought out the alternative choice leading to spiritual life and light.

Having lived a human life, Jesus experienced every kind of death-trap possible—every time, he has a choice. Every time, he chooses life and light.

Jesus, **Wonderful Counselor** *"...understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testing we do, yet he did not sin."* (Hebrews 4:15)

Jesus is a **Wonderful Counselor**, because he has personal experience with the very hardship you and I are experiencing. He knows exactly what our challenges look like, because he was a person like us. But in Jesus, there is more! Before his "personhood" was his "Godhood"—his full humanity was gift-wrapped in the beautiful package of complete divinity!

Not only does Jesus sympathize—Jesus empathizes! That makes him our **Wonderful Counselor**!

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU AND ME?

- When life grows dark, where do you look for the light? When the darkness is bigger than us, we need help that's bigger than the dark!
- When we can't find our own way, we need a guide who is familiar with this road we are walking.

Christmas inspires us to look at our lives through Spiritual eyes. We do not have control over our circumstances, or other people, but with help from our **Wonderful Counselor**, we can control how we respond to them.

In spiritual terms, Jesus, our **Wonderful Counselor** is ready and waiting to:

- Give us answers and insight
- Empower us to move toward life-giving choices
- Calm us when we are stressed
- Equip us with tools to use in response to what life throws at us

JESUS' INTENTION TOWARD US IS ALWAYS LOVE.

So, when we need some counsel, let's be intentional to look for answers from our **Wonderful Counselor**. Jesus loves for us to seek His counsel. In fact, Jesus constantly coaches us to bring all of our worries to Him! Nothing is too small, too big or too impossible for Him.

"...let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most." (Hebrews 4:16 NLT)

The Christmas Season reminds us Jesus came to us... already...and he never leaves us. We can constantly come to Jesus in full confidence, knowing he listens, then he leads.

Getting Personal

When you encounter darkness, what thoughts and processes can you put into place to confidently approach your Wonderful Counselor? (See hints in the passages below.) Here are some additional scripture passages that will solidify the way you see and approach Jesus as Wonderful Counselor. As you read, notice what the passage says about Jesus. How does it relate to Wonderful Counselor?

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES:

- 2 Chronicles 16:9
- Jeremiah 33:3
- 1 Corinthians 2:6-16
- Hebrews 4:12
- Jeremiah 29:11
- Matthew 11:25-30
- Philipians 4:6-7