

**December 25, 2006**  
**Christmas Day**

*“For Unto Us a Child Is Born”*

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**ISAIAH 9:6**

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**F**or unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

This past week thousands of travelers were stranded in the Denver airport because of a huge snowstorm that dumped over two feet of snow in the Denver area. There were so many flights cancelled and delayed that some people were worried about getting home for Christmas to be with their family and friends.

Have you ever been stranded in an airport? Have you experienced the frustration of not being able to get to where you want to be? Let me ask you and even more important question. Have you ever wanted to be in that special place of being closer to your God and the love he has for you, but somehow you felt stranded, trapped, almost paralyzed? Do you realize how many people living will not be home for Christmas? They are thousands of miles away from being home with their heavenly Father and the love he has for them in the gift of Jesus his Son.

This morning we invite you to come with us to a very special place where we can see and experience and enjoy being home with our God as we meditate on the gift of his Son. Put another log in the fire, bring out another cup of herb tea, cuddle up with people you love, and let's just relish together these words just read to you about the love God has for you in his Son. To help us on these words we want to emphasize certain words, one at a time to savor them and appreciate them.

Unto us a child is born. Unto us a son is given. Who me? Who us? That's amazing considering how a holy and righteous God cannot accept people like us because we are unacceptable to him because of our sin. Here is what we look like according to Isaiah 59, "We look for light, but all is darkness; for brightness but we walk in deep shadows. Like the blind we grope along the wall, feeling our way like men with out eyes." Unto us a child was born, when we least deserved it.

Remember how depressed Charlie Brown was because the little red hair girl never noticed him. He asks Linus almost in tears, "Do you know why that little red-haired girl never notices me? Because I'm nothing! When she looks over here, there's nothing to see! How can she see someone who's nothing?" There's a long pause and then Linus ventures a brilliant reply. "You're depressed, aren't you?" God cares about me, even though I don't deserve it and I am nothing. "Unto us a child is born. Unto us a son is given."

Unto us a child is born. Unto us a son is given. Get closer to your God this morning. See his love for you in child that is born and son that is given. This is no ordinary child. "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord." His name is Emmanuel, God with us. "The Word becomes flesh and dwells among us." A father told his

frightened little boy the reassuring words that God was with him. But said, the little fellow, I want a God with skin on. This morning with eyes of faith we see in a manger, a child who is born, who is Lord and God, a God with skin on. Martin Luther said in a sermon on John 1:14, "He became incarnate for our sakes in order that we might enter into great glory, that our flesh and blood, skin and hair, hands and feet, stomach and back might reside in heaven as God does."

Now let's emphasize two words in the next phrase: "and the government shall be upon his shoulder." A little girl asked her daddy at Christmas time, "Who was taking care of the world when Jesus was a tiny baby in the manger." Like the little girl we marvel at how a little child is at the same time Lord and God. This Lord and God governs the world. He speaks to us the psalms: "A cattle on a thousand hills our mine." He is a God who opens his hands and satisfies the hunger of every creature in the world, a God who establish world governments and then breaks the bow and shatters the spears and burns the shields with fire." Even more important the government of my life is on his shoulders. Isaiah tells us, "See the Lord God comes with power and his arm rules for him... He tends his flock like shepherd. He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young. "The government shall be upon his shoulder." The King of kings and Lord of lords comes into our lives and makes us part of his kingdom of love that lasts forever. It all rests on his shoulders, not on me.

And his name shall be called Wonderful. The Hebrew word for "wonderful" is Pelah. It literally means a miracle. Everything about the child born to us is a miracle. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He is the Word made flesh who dwelt among us. He performed mighty miracles. By a mighty miracle he took our sin upon himself and paid for it on the cross. He rose from the dead. He sits at the right hand of God and miraculously micromanages every aspect of our lives so that we became living testimony to his glory and greatness. He has broken through the thick walls of unbelief in your life and mine and convinced you that he is a miracle. His name is wonderful.

In the movie, *It's a Wonderful Life*, an angel appears to poor George Bailey and helps him see that his life was much better than he thought it was. The angel helped him see how his love served a good purpose. The focus for us this morning is on the life that Jesus lived for you and the death he died for you, and his birth in Bethlehem. That's the wonderful life that allows us to wake up every morning joyfully singing, "This is the day the Lord has made let us rejoice and be glad in it."

And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor. One of the great joys of a good marriage is the opportunity to be there for each other to counsel and help each other through good times and difficult times. Think of how someone who loves you and cares about you is always there for you and gives you good counsel and good advice. Think of how many times Jesus has counseled you with his Word. We listen to him speak to us, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, I would have told. I am going to prepare place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." The counsel that Jesus gives allows us to look at life's problems and troubles and say, "In the light of eternity does it really matter?"

And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God. The Hebrew word for

mighty is Gibbor. It is a word used to describe valiant and powerful warriors, a word used to describe a powerful warrior or champion such as Goliath. Jesus is our mighty God our warrior God. Psalm 24 has the words, "Lift up you heads, O you gates; lift them up, you ancient doors, that the king of glory may come in." Then the question is asked, "Who is this king of glory?" The answer comes back, "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle."

We are no match for Satan on our own. The forces of evil that turned the land of Narnia in a frozen world of death, are nothing compared to the forces of evil we face on a daily basis, even in this special holiday season. Satan never takes off work for the holidays as we do. "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." As tough as the battlefield is, the one who fights for us is much stronger. The baby in Bethlehem is El Gibbor, the mighty God. "With might of ours can naught be done; Soon were our loss effected. But for us fights the valiant one Whom God himself elected. You ask, "Who is this?" Jesus Christ it is, The almighty Lord. And there's no other God; He holds the field forever."

And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father. From the words of the popular song, "Mary Did You Know." Mary, did you know That your baby boy has walked where angels trod? And when you kiss your little boy You've kissed the face of God." Jesus said, "I and the Father are one." And "He who has seen me has seen the Father." He is the everlasting Father. Think of how many changes you have seen in the lives of people this past year, even in your own life. Think of the potential changes coming this next year. Jesus and the everlasting Father are one God. He is the same yesterday, today and forever."

And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. The night of his resurrection from the dead, this child born to us and this sin given to us walked through the closed doors of a room, appeared to his disciples, and said, "Peace be to you!" Then he showed them his hands and side, the wounds and marks that he carried with him of the peace we have with God through the sacrifice made in our behalf. Have you ever looked at the hands of little baby and been totally fascinated at how beautiful those hands are. Look at the hands of Jesus as a paper. See the hands that will bear the wounds that bring ultimate peace to the world. "Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth good will toward men." This is a peace the world cannot give, a peace that is yours even when you don't feel at peace inside.

Imagine yourself stranded in the airport in Denver. It is Christmas Eve. You are surrounded by people who are anger and upset that they have not been able to get home. Then you hear the sound of guitar playing a familiar song, "Silent Night." People are drawn to the corner where a young man is playing Christmas carols. They join in singing Silent Night and other carols. Someone pulls out a Bible and reads from Luke 2. Christians gathered in that lonely place, share the real meaning of Christmas, and suddenly they don't feel so all alone. Unto us a child is born...."