

## Wonderful Counselor

Jed N. Snyder Isaiah 9:6

To teach the wonder of Jesus which is the foundation of His counseling so that my people may stand in awe of Him and obediently follow his counsel.

Introduction:

Today we use the word wonderful almost as casually as we do the word love. We say, "My, that was a wonderful meal" or we say, "Oh, she sang so wonderfully." "What a wonderful series of play selections for that football game last night." All of these expressions may attempt to express our feelings but by using the word "wonderful" in this manner we actually cheapen the word.

I'm afraid this cheapening has entered into the way we under the word "wonderful" when we see it in the Bible. We need to better understand the name of Christ "Wonderful Counselor".

### I. The Wonder of Christ

The Hebrew translated "wonderful" or "wonder" carries the meaning of acts of God designating either cosmic wonders or historical achievements (frequently on behalf of Israel). These things awaken astonishment because they are beyond human capabilities. These wonders are so abnormal as to be unexplainable except as showing God's care or retribution. Hamilton, Victor P., Theological Wordbook of the O.T., Eds. Harris, R. Laird, Archer, Gleason Archer, Jr., Waltke, Bruce K., Moody Press, 1980 Vol. 2, p. 723.

God's appearance in the burning bush (Exodus. 3:2ff) talking to Moses is one illustration, the widow's unending flow of oil in Elisha's day (2 Kings 4) is another and the death angel's destruction of the army of Sennacherib, the Assyrian. (Isaiah 37:36-37) Then the angel of the LORD went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up the next morning there were all the dead bodies! {37}So Sennacherib king of Assyria broke camp and withdrew. He returned to Nineveh and stayed there.

The word also has the connotation of being incomprehensible, beyond human ability to conceive or understand. (Deuteronomy 17:8) If cases come before your courts that are too difficult (wonderful) for you to judge, whether bloodshed, lawsuits or assaults, take them to the place the LORD your God will choose. (Zechariah 8:6) This is what the LORD Almighty says: "It may seem marvelous (wonderful) to the remnant of this people at that time, but will it seem marvelous to me?" declares the LORD Almighty.

The idea of awesome, wonderful, beyond human understanding and power is seen in many of the Psalms, particularly those of prayers of thanksgiving. See Psalm 78, 105, 106, etc.

Finally in understanding of this name, we should know that the ultimate function of God's wonder in relationship to mankind is to make mercy available to the recipient or receiver and not just to make a demonstration of power. (Psalm 31:21) Praise be to the LORD, for he showed his wonderful love to me when I was in a besieged city.

There are numerous indications of God's wonders both in Biblical and extra-Biblical literature.

This name of God (here in Isaiah 9:6) obviously refers to Christ (as do the other names in this verse). Jewish commentators' efforts to retranslate this verse to make the names refer to God, the Father are spurious. Early Jewish scholars accepted these names as being of the Messiah.

This name of Christ can be seen in what we know of...

A. His Nature

Christ is unique. He is the God-Man. There never has been nor ever will be another like Him. He taught of his own humanity and of his own deity. We won't take time today to develop His teaching concerning His humanity. But we categorically reject any teaching which teaches Him to be some sort of spirit that is not really human or some sort of human that is not essentially human in nature. He taught Himself to be fully human and fully divine.

Herbert Lockyer said, (Lockyer, Herbert. Everything Jesus Taught Harper and Row Publishers, 1976, 1984, p. 20.) "The evidence of the deity of Jesus, then, is the warp and woof of the Gospels. A threefold cord that cannot be broken proves his position in the Godhead:

1. His assertions of equality with God the Father (John 5:17, 18, 21-23; 10:30, 33).
2. His prerogative to forgive sins (Matthew 9:6; Mark 2:7, 10).
3. His authority to give eternal life to all who believe (John 10:27, 28)."

Dr. Warfield puts it: IBID.

"Speaking in the most solemn manner, he not only presents himself as the Son, as the sole source of knowledge of God, and of blessedness for men, but places himself in a position, not of equality merely, but of absolute reciprocity and interpenetration of knowledge of the Father, as if the being of the Son were so immense that only God could know it thoroughly, and the knowledge of the Son so unlimited that he could know God to perfection."

This name can also be seen in what we know of his nurture...

B. His Nurture

1. What He taught

The unique nature of his teaching...

We can only mention a few of Jesus' teachings:

- a. God is holy (John 17:11, 25) I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name the name you gave me so that they may be one as we are one. {25} "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me.

Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible, in the article "Holiness of God," observes: IBID. p.45-46

"The holiness which Jehovah requires, and which is evidently to be thought of as to some extent of the same nature as His own, includes

Honesty, Leviticus 19:11, 36.

Truthfulness, Leviticus 19:11.

Respect for Parents, Leviticus 19:3, 20:9.

Fair dealing with Servants, Leviticus 19:13.

Kindness to Strangers, Leviticus 19:34

The weak and helpless, Leviticus 19:14, 32.

The poor, Leviticus 19:9.

Social purity, Leviticus 20:11, 18.

Love of neighbors, Leviticus 19:18.

Abstinence from blood as food, Leviticus 17:10.

From unlawful mixtures, Leviticus 19:19.

From fruit of newly planted trees for the first 3 years, Leviticus 19:23  
Priestly compliance with special rules about mourning and marriage, Leviticus 21:1-15”

b. God is love

God is Spirit (John 4:24), light (1 John 1:5), truth (John 14:6), and love (1 John 4:8, 16). God not only loves, but is love; it is his very nature, and Jesus taught that this nature must be the sphere in which all who abide in God must abide (1 John 4:16). We can think of his love as filial (Father-Son), as universal (John 3:16) as individual (Gal. 2:20 "who loved me, and gave himself for me"), sacrificial (also John 3:16), and reciprocal (Matthew 22:37).

There is much more about the nature of Jesus Christ of which we cannot speak now.  
Now let us glance at..

2. What He did

The unique nature of his actions...

a. He healed the sick: Matthew 4:23-24 Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. {24} News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and he healed them.

b. He loved the little children: Matthew 19:14 Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

c. He rejected hypocritical leadership: Matthew 23:16-17 "Woe to you, blind guides! You say, 'If anyone swears by the temple, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.' {17} You blind fools! Which is greater: the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred?

Matthew 23:27-28 "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside, but on the inside are full of dead men's bones and everything unclean. {28} In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.

d. He came to seek and save the lost: Luke 19:9-10 "And Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.'"

Thus we see the nature of our Lord Jesus Christ as wonderful. He is also counselor. Or we can say "Wonder-Counselor" or "Wonderful Counselor".

II. The Counsel of Christ

Proverbs 8:14 Counsel and sound judgment are mine; I have understanding and power.

The word used for counselor is from a root meaning to advise, to consult, determine, devise, guide or purpose. It is seen among men in places like Ex. 18:19 where Jethro advises Moses how to carry out the judging and ruling of the people. It is also used when Hushai's counsel is accepted by Absalom over that of Ahithophel (2 Samuel 17). This story shows that God's counsel overcomes that of man in order to accomplish His overall plan. (2 Sam 17:14) Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The advice of Hushai the Arkite is better than that of Ahithophel." For the LORD had determined to frustrate the good advice of Ahithophel in order to bring disaster on Absalom.

## A. The Truth

Isaiah 11:25 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him, the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD {3} and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; {4} but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. {5} Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

## B. The Technique

### 1. Come

Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. {29} Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. {30} for my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

### 2. Abide

John 15:4-9 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. {5} "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. {6} If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. {7} If you remain in me and my words remain in you ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. {8} This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. {9} "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

### 3. Follow

John 8:12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

## Conclusion:

Do you believe that God is really wonderful? Do you expect wonderful (supernatural) things to happen in the life of the church? In your own life? In world evangelism?

Maybe you need the miracle of the new birth yourself? Will you let this wonderful God become your own personal Savior?

Maybe you are facing particularly difficult decisions or circumstances that are just beyond your own reasoning ability. Remember that Jesus is the counselor who is also wonderful. Let Him direct you. He is the only one who knows the future. He will be your adviser, guide, with wisdom that excels.