“Unto Us a Child is Born: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God”

Isaiah 9:1-7

(notes based on the sermon by Pastor Steve Massey, Hayden Bible Church, 12/13/20)

Where do I turn to make sense of life? (Q1)

Whose power, strength, and ability do I typically rely on, mine or God’s?

Today’s Bible Study highlights the contrast between gloom and glory. Christ brings light into the darkness. Darkness has been man’s default setting since Adam’s fall. We need rescue to escape the darkness. Isaiah 9:2 and 9:6 describe that rescuing light: Jesus! Christmas is the message of Light bursting into darkness.

Be attentive to the important names in 9:2 and 9:6. These names help us understand God’s nature and His mission. Jesus is the Light sent from Heaven to dispel darkness. The name “Jesus” was chosen for Joseph and Mary to show who He is: He will save His people (Matt. 1:21). Christ our Lord reigns over all things, even now. Has this Son been given to you? Have you bent your knee to Him? To live in the Light sent from Heaven is to live a life governed by Him. One day EVERY knee will bow to Him (Phil. 2:9-11). (Q2)

The next name, “Wonderful”, is only used in the Old Testament to describe God’s work and God’s nature. He is our Wonderful “Counselor”. All the wisdom of all the ages rests in our Counselor. We need that wisdom to live in this dark world; we need Divine guidance. The Word of Christ (in the light of the Holy Spirit) gives us the wisdom we need in this dark world. (Q3)

Walking in darkness leads to stumbling and insecurity. Do the threats before you seem greater than the God you cannot see? Do you cower in darkness? By the way, the misuse of light is also darkness. We’ve seen that a lot in 2020. (Example: Who decides what it means to love your neighbor: GOD DOES! We don’t love our neighbor by compelling them to do what we want them to do.) Then and now people twist God’s truth. Then and now people let the culture decide what “truth” is. But His children live in the light of the promises of God. Order your life by the counsel of His Word. Live it, don’t simply study it.

In 2020, as people face economic distress and fear of the future, they come up with their own forms of counsel: “following your gut”, “following your heart”, “group think”, politicized “science”, etc. But what is sure and certain? The Word of God! Jesus was crystal clear in John 14:6: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.” He is the Mighty God, both divine and human. The word “mighty” carries the idea of a warrior. Baby Jesus, born in a manger, is a mighty warrior! God’s people are to live in dependence upon the strength of their mighty God.

You know, your greatest enemy is you, when you live in willful rebellion or in ignorance of the truth. (Q4) We trust Jesus for salvation; shouldn’t we trust Him with lesser things? Instead, we fear conflict, we fear other people’s opinions, we fear lots of things. But God’s eyes are open to all of this, so fret not! Life would be hopeless except for this: the Christ Child has been born **for you**! He is indeed our mighty God. It is the same might that spoke the universe into existence. It is the same might that accepted the wrath of God that our sin deserves. He has power over death itself! And He grants His people a share in His great victory. (Q5) Is He your mighty God, carrying your sins away? Is He your Wonderful Counselor, leading you into His best?

Where do you turn when you’re lost in the darkness?

Whose strength do you rely on in a world of confusion and sin?

**QUESTIONS:**

1. In 2020, where do people turn to make sense of life?
2. Read Matt. 28:18. What does it mean to live under His authority?
3. In what ways does the Word of Christ help lead you? (see Col. 3:16)
4. What did Pastor Steve mean when he said, “Your greatest enemy is you”?
5. Some people play at religion, but deny this great power (see 2Tim. 3:1-5). How can you make sure you are not one of those people?

“Come Thou Long Expected Jesus” (Charles Wesley)

1. Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,  
   Born to set Thy people free;  
   From our fears and sins release us,  
   Let us find our rest in Thee.  
   Israel’s Strength and Consolation,  
   Hope of all the earth Thou art;  
   Dear Desire of every nation,  
   Joy of every longing heart.
2. Born Thy people to deliver,  
   Born a child and yet a King,  
   Born to reign in us forever,  
   Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.  
   By Thine own eternal Spirit  
   Rule in all our hearts alone;  
   By Thine all-sufficient merit,  
   Raise us to Thy glorious throne.