

WONDERFUL COUNSELOR

AS WE GATHER

During the season of Advent, we prepare to celebrate the birth of God's Son, who was given the name *Jesus*—a Hebrew name that means “God saves.” However, in addition to His earthly name, Holy Scripture calls Jesus by various titles that describe something about His person or work. We will examine the four titles given to Jesus in Isaiah 9:6—Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace—and will study how each of these titles describes something about who Jesus is and what He did for our salvation.

Today we consider how God rescues us from the cunning counsel of the devil and blesses us with the wonderful counsel of His Son, whose Word of truth sets us free from sin and its damning deception. Jesus is given the title Wonderful Counselor because His Word rescues us from the lies of the devil and our own self-deception and leads us into God's wisdom, which results in our salvation.

INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

HYMN #900

"Jesus! Name of Wondrous Love"



1 Je - sus! Name of won-drous love, Name all oth - er names a - bove,
2 Je - sus! Name de - creed of old, To the maid-en moth - er told,
3 Je - sus! Name of price - less worth To the fall - en of the earth



Un - to which must ev - 'ry knee Bow in deep hu - mil - i - ty.
Kneel - ing in her low - ly cell, By the an - gel Ga - bri - el.
For the prom - ise that it gave, "Je - sus shall His peo - ple save."

Text: William W. How, 1823–97, alt. Tune: Geist-reiches Gesang-Buch, 1704, Halle, ed. Johann A. Freylinghausen, alt.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 9:1–2, 6–7

P A reading from Isaiah, the ninth chapter.

But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time He brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time He has made glorious

the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shined.

C For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon His shoulder,
and His name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

P Of the increase of His government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over His kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C Thanks be to God.

P When Isaiah looked forward to our Lord's coming, he said it would be as if "the people who walked in darkness [had] seen a great light" (Isaiah 9:2). We give thanks that the Holy Spirit has shown the light of the Gospel into our hearts.

HYMN #396

"Arise and Shine In Splendor"



1 A - rise and shine in splen - dor; Let night to day sur -
2 See earth in dark - ness ly - ing, The hea - then na - tions



ren - der. Your light is draw - ing near. A - bove, the
dy - ing In hope - less gloom and night. To you the



day is beam - ing, In match - less beau - ty
Lord of heav - en— Your life, your hope— has



gleam - ing; The glo - ry of the Lord is here.
giv - en Great glo - ry, hon - or, and de - light.

Text: Martin Opitz, 1597–1639; tr. Gerhard Gieschen, 1899–1987, alt. Tune: Heinrich Isaac, c. 1450–1517
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CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

- P** We do not always bring our sins to God, confident that our Wonderful Counselor has forgiven them all. Let us therefore confess our sins to our heavenly Father.
- C** **I confess that I have sinned against You this day. Some of my sin I know—the thoughts and words and deeds of which I am ashamed—but some is known only to You. In the name of Jesus Christ, I ask forgiveness. Deliver and restore me that I may rest in peace.**
- P** By the mercy of God we are redeemed by Jesus Christ, and in Him we are forgiven. We rest now in His peace and rise in the morning to serve Him.
- C** **Amen.**

HYMN #334

"O Lord, How Shall I Meet You"



5 Sin's debt, that fear - ful bur - den, Can - not His love e - rase;



Your guilt the Lord will par - don And cov - er by His grace.



He comes, for you pro - cur - ing The peace of sin - for - giv'n,



His chil - dren thus se - cur - ing E - ter - nal life in heav'n.

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607–76; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt. Tune: Johann Crüger, 1598–1662

PSALM

Psalm 119:129–136; antiphon: v. 129

- P** Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul keeps them.
- C** **The unfolding of Your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple.**

- P** I open my mouth and pant, because I long for Your commandments.
- C** **Turn to me and be gracious to me, as is Your way with those who love Your name.**
- P** Keep steady my steps according to Your promise, and let no iniquity get dominion over me.
- C** **Redeem me from man’s oppression, that I may keep Your precepts.**
- P** Make Your face shine upon Your servant, and teach me Your statutes.
- C** **My eyes shed streams of tears, because people do not keep Your law.**
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen. Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul keeps them.

SECOND READING

Romans 11:32–36

- P** A reading from Romans, the eleventh chapter.

For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!
 How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

“For who has known the mind of the Lord,
 or who has been his counselor?”

“Or who has given a gift to him
 that he might be repaid?”

For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

- P** O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

THIRD READING

Matthew 7:24–29

- P** A reading from Matthew, the seventh chapter.

“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone

who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORY FOR ADVENT

Jeremiah 23:5a, 6

P Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch.

C This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.

P In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely.

C This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.

P Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

C This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.

CATECHISM

The Second Article

P What does it mean that we believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord?

C I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

SERIES HYMN #412

"The People That in Darkness Sat"



1 The peo - ple that in dark - ness sat A glo - rious
2 To hail Thee, Sun of Righ - teous - ness, The gath - 'ring
3 To us a Child of hope is born, To us a
4 His name shall be the Prince of Peace, The Ev - er -



light have seen; The light has shined on them who long In
na - tions come; They joy as when the reap - ers bear Their
Son is giv'n, And on His shoul - der ev - er rests All
last - ing Lord, The Won - der - ful, the Coun - sel - or, The



shades of death have been, In shades of death have been.
har - vest trea - sures home, Their har - vest trea - sures home.
pow'r in earth and heav'n, All pow'r in earth and heav'n.
God by all a - dored, The God by all a - dored.

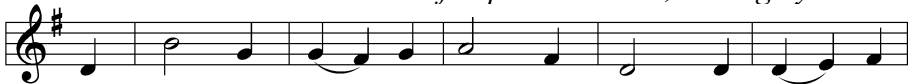
His righteous government and pow'r
Shall over all extend;
On judgment and on justice based,
His reign shall have no end,
His reign shall have no end.

Lord Jesus, reign in us, we pray,
And make us Thine alone,
Who with the Father ever art
And Holy Spirit, one,
And Holy Spirit, one.

Text: John Morison, 1749-98, alt. Tune: Nicolaus Herman, c. 1480-1561

SERMON "Wonderful Counselor" Isaiah 9:1-2, 6-7
OFFERING

OFFERTORY #341 *"Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates"*



5 Re - deem - er, come and o - pen wide My heart to



Thee; here, Lord, a - bide! O en - ter with Thy grace di -

vine; Thy face of mer - cy on me shine. Thy Ho - ly
Spir - it guide us on Un - til our glo - rious goal is won.
E - ter - nal praise and fame We of - fer to Thy name.

Text: Georg Weissel, 1590–1635; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt. Tune: August Lemke, 1820–1913

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

PRAYER FROM SUNDAY

- P** Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come,
- C** that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance;
- P** for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

PRAYER FOR TODAY

- P** Shine into our hearts, O Lord, and illumine every part of our lives,
- C** so that we will be ready to rejoice at Your birth and be guiding lights for those who do not yet know Your saving grace and forgiveness;
- P** for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

LUTHER'S EVENING PRAYER

- C** I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me.
Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

C Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

BENEDICTION

P The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless you and keep you.

C Amen.

HYMN #334

"O Lord, How Shall I Meet You"



1 O Lord, how shall I meet You, How wel - come You a - right?
4 Love caused Your in - car - na - tion; Love brought You down to me.
6 He comes to judge the na - tions, A ter - ror to His foes,



Your peo - ple long to greet You, My hope, my heart's de - light!
Your thirst for my sal - va - tion Pro - cured my lib - er - ty.
A light of con - so - la - tions And bless - ed hope to those



O kin - dle, Lord most ho - ly, Your lamp with - in my breast
Oh, love be - yond all tell - ing, That led You to em - brace
Who love the Lord's ap - pear - ing. O glo - rious Sun, now come,



To do in spir - it low - ly All that may please You best.
In love, all love ex - cel - ling, Our lost and fall - en race.
Send forth Your beams so cheer - ing, And guide us safe - ly home.

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607-76; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt. Tune: Johann Crüger, 1598-1662

DISMISSAL

P Go in peace as you serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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