

Christmas Adventure

Every new parent spends countless hours thumbing through books of names, lists of combinations and endless possibilities. Some parents wait until the moment of birth, others know as soon as the news is made public. In any case a name is more than a label it becomes a mark of who we are, it identifies us and sets us apart from others.

For the next four weeks we will embark on a fantastic journey in preparation for Christmas. Each week of advent we will discover through the eyes and hearts of the men of our church how Isaiah's names of the Messiah impacts their lives, and ours as well. We pray you will use this devotional with your family as you prepare for Christmas. Discover how from Isaiah 9:6 the names the prophet gave to the holy one will change your life.

Week 1: "Wonderful Counselor"

Week 2: "Mighty God"

Week 3: "Everlasting Father"

Week 4: "Prince of Peace"

God Bless you as we rediscover that Jesus is "THE REASON FOR THE SEASON".

The name means everything!

Philippians 2:5-11

Pastor Rick Oliver

Advent Devotional 2011

Week 1

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

Monday December 5

Everlasting Father

God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

1 John 5:11

What image does the word father bring to mind? Perhaps a loving parent who is strong and protective; a reliable provider. All true but remember this title is referring to Jesus, the Messiah. Is He our eternal Father or as the Complete Jewish Bible says, the Father of eternity?

The apostle Paul tells us in Colossians 1 that everything that exists was created by and is held together by Jesus. He is before all things. Daniel refers to Him as the Ancient of Days (Dan. 7) and Jesus calls Himself the "beginning and the end" (Rev. 22).

The great "I AM" is not just our forever Father; He is the Father of Forever. This speaks to us of His deity and assures us of His eternity. He holds the past, the present and the future in His hands. The angel did bring good news; we have a future and it is in Him!

~Christopher Clemmons

Tuesday, December 6

Prince of Peace

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7

Growing up, every Christmas morning before we could open our presents, my Dad would read the Christmas story from Luke 2:1-20. My brother and sister and I would then hang our angel ornaments on the tree while we all sang Silent Night and then have prayer. I'm not sure why Silent Night was chosen, but I think it was because it was one of my Mom's favorite Christmas songs. In the song it says "holy infant so tender and mild, sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace". I got to thinking about those words of heavenly peace, and do I experience God's peace in my life every day?

I am one of those people who can really get worried or anxious about things if I don't watch myself. I worry about things such as: what will people think of me, or did I do that right, or what if something goes wrong? I've gotten a lot better and found if I always bring it to God in prayer, he can provide the peace and comfort I need. The verses in Philippians above mean a lot to me. They remind me that the peace of God is always there for me if I just ask him. Another important aspect that I think is crucial is not only to present your requests to God, but to do it with thanksgiving like it says. Many times we pray for God's peace and don't have the right attitude or we fail to give thanks to God for what he has done for us already. No matter what is going on in our lives, if we bring our problems and concerns to God with a thankful heart, he will provide us with a peace that will guard and calm our hearts and minds. We may not understand it, but it will be just what we need so that we too can sleep in heavenly peace.

~Jeron Chatelain

Wednesday, December 7

Mighty God

But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you.

Psalm 5:11

In 2010 I was able to take my son fishing in Alaska with the Band of Brothers. My son is 38 and this was our first real father and son trip and it was a fantastic time. In the evenings we would have worship time and Bible Study. On one particular evening we were singing a song that I cannot remember the name of but one verse was about soaring on Eagles wings. While we were singing that verse we could see five or six Eagles soaring through the trees right out the window. I will never forget that moment. That was not a coincidence, it was our Mighty God!

~Mike Hagan

Thursday, December 8

Prince of Peace

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:7

Think of Mary, a teenage girl (perhaps 13 or 14) engaged to Joseph, when the angel Gabriel told her she would have a child, Jesus, and he would be called the Son of God. (Luke 1: 26-38). Mary was engaged, but not yet married to Joseph. According to customs of that time, her life would be in danger, since the penalty for Adultery was stoning to death. Even though the angel Gabriel assured Mary she was in God's favor, can you imagine the concerns she was faced with? Her response was, "I am the Lords servant, May it be to me as you have said." Mary was given a choice. When faced with hard choices, we can say to God, "this is too much for me," or be like Mary, in her response. When we truly know and accept Christ as our savior, we too will find the peace that transcends (passes) all understanding.

~Jim Phelps

Friday December 9th

Prince of Peace

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.

John 14:27

I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world .

John 16:33

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:7

So often this time of year can be anything but peaceful. We have shopping, work obligations, family stresses and schedules that if we allow them, can drag us down. But as a Christian, I am so thankful that we can rest in knowing that Jesus provides us with HIS peace during the holidays and EVERY DAY of the year – He is the Prince of Peace.

The holiday season can be confusing for many people. We're told by the world that it's supposed to be a wonderful time of the year, but instead it's a rough time for many people. Discontent. Depression. Disappointment. That's what many people experience during the holidays.

But as a Christian, the Christmas season should remind us of the ultimate gift that God has given us - The free gift of salvation!

And as we read God's word and reflect on this gift, we understand that:

We are forgiven....

We have a relationship with the Lord...

We're going to Heaven to live with Him forever...

And with this understanding, "...the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

May we go our way this season and experience the gift of peace that a relationship with God affords us to have. Yes, we'll have stresses, obligations and rough days. But at the same time, may we rest in the fact that, "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

~Dave Williams

Saturday December 10th

Mighty God

They will tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your might, so that all men may know of your mighty acts and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.

Psalms 145:11-12

In October I moved my daughter in-law from Kamloops BC to Grande Prairie AB.

This was a 10 hour drive, I was in a U-Haul and my daughter in-law and granddaughter were following me in her car. As we drove I asked God for safe travel. During that day I saw many examples of the splendor of God's kingdom. We went through Jasper Park in the Canadian Rockies and I thanked God for the beautiful scenery. I also asked God if we could see some wildlife on our trip. Not long after that a Caribou crossed the road in front of me. About an hour later there was a herd of deer beside the road. Then I asked God if I could see a Moose, it wasn't 30 minutes later and there was a Moose beside the road. The only problem is it was dead. I just started laughing; yes God does have a sense of humor! This was our Mighty God at work.

~Mike Hagan

Sunday December 11th

Mighty God

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless. I will confirm my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers."

Genesis 17:1-2.

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."

Revelation 4:8b.

In the first and last books of the bible God identifies himself as "God Almighty." This identity is from before the world began through the New Testament and forever, or from "everlasting to everlasting." As we consider miracles in the Old Testament; like the parting of the Red Sea, the battle of Jericho, David slaying Goliath, Noah and the ark and many others, and miracles of the New Testament; like Jesus turning water into wine, healing people, driving out demons, raising Lazarus from the dead, being raised from the dead himself, and miracles today; like saving us from sin, giving the Holy Spirit to live in us, giving us the position as sons and daughters of God, and preparing a place for us to be with him forever, how can we fail to recognize him as Almighty God!

~Jim Phelps