

We will be continuing our four part series from Isaiah 9:6 (Read Scripture)

Just a little background and review:

These words were spoken by the prophet Isaiah over 700 years before Jesus was born. He prophesied in and around Jerusalem and at this particular time, there was great turmoil in Judah.

The large Assyrian Army was a force to be reckoned with during this time in history. They were large in numbers, a world power of their day, and to make matters worse, they were on the move.

The King, at this time, was King Ahaz (he was not a good man). He didn't worship God; he ignored him. He made wrong choices and he was corrupt.

The nation of Israel was facing a hopeless situation. It was at this time that God spoke through the prophet Isaiah that the enemies of Judah would be defeated.

In this most grave situation, there was hope. God is going to deliver his people through the birth of a child, not just an ordinary child, but the Messiah. Our messiah with the names of "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace."

The past two weeks Pastor Roger has spoken in reference of the first two names of the Christ child. First he shared about Christ being our "Wonderful Counselor."

- Christ is wonderful in his character and his nature
- He equips us with wisdom and discernment
- He teaches us to see this world through the eyes of faith

He is the wonderful counselor who is the master strategist of our life.

- He is able to deal with the problem we face.
- He brings hope where there doesn't seem to be any hope.
- No other counselor can give that guarantee.
- He is the ultimate counselor.

The second name that Pastor talked about was "Mighty God." We find him to be holy and righteous, a God we can put our complete trust in.

He is the mighty God who wants to help you accomplish all things by being your source of strength. Jesus is your biggest fan. He believes in you!

Pastor made reference as Jesus being our hero – Absolutely. He is our hero because he has conquered sin and death.

Jesus didn't come to be served; he came to serve. He came, he lived, he sacrificed, He conquered. He rose from the dead and he now sits at the Father's right hand in heaven.

He is our absolute hero, our mighty God.

Next, I want to examine the next title Jesus is given: Everlasting Father.

This particular title can create a lot of questions, such as, “How can the son be the Father?” As a matter of fact, it is easy to get sidetracked when we talked about Jesus as the “Everlasting Father.”

Scripture affirms that there is one God, who is manifested in three distinct and separate persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Jesus is not called Everlasting Father because there is confusion about the nature of God the Father and God the Son.

Jesus is called “Everlasting Father” because of his Father-like qualities. He is still God the Son but his love and grace is like that of a father with his children.

Whenever we think of the word father, it sparks an immediate range and assortment of thoughts.

For many, it's the thought of our earthly father – a father child relationship.

For some it's the thought of our relationship with a heavenly father or our spiritual father.

The title “Father” is used in ministry. In the Catholic church, priests are called fathers.

In Hollywood and the entertainment world, Steve Martin is known as a father in Parenthood, Father of the Bride and Cheaper by the Dozen. Marlon Brando is the God Father.

In history, James Madison is called the Father of the Constitution. Henry Ford is the father of the Model-T. Benjamin Franklin the father of Inventions.

For me, whenever I think of the word “father” I think of my dad and the relationship we have with each other.

My father was a blue-collar worker, a truck mechanic by trade. He worked hard, long hours to make life comfortable for our family. My father is loved and respected by those who know him.

When I think of him, there are 2 strong attributes that stand out:

1. The first is the spirit of giving
 - a. He always puts others first. He gives of his time and energy. He is a real servant.
2. The 2nd area that stands out for me was that I thought my dad could fix anything. If there was something wrong with the car, Dad would have it running again in no time.

He was a repairman – a handyman.

I can remember hopping in the car, on our way to pick up a part, and I would think to myself: “I want to grow up to be like my dad and be able to fix anything.”

Well, I'm still waiting to get to that place in my life.

The thing I am the most thankful for, that I received from my father, was the example he set in his spiritual life:

- I was raised in a Christian home
- I attended church every Sunday
- God was a priority in our home

I'm thankful to my father for the values he instilled in me, and even though he lives far away, and I treasure our relationship.

I know that everyone here this morning hasn't necessarily had the positive father role model like me. I'm sure there are those that come from broken homes, one-parent families, and dysfunctional situations.

With the divorce rate about 50%, so many children are growing up without fathers or a father figure in their life. They are growing up feeling insecure and unprotected. Fatherlessness is one of the prevailing issues of our generation.

Whether it's a father who is physically absent or one who is emotionally distant or hurtful, the lack of a father has left a noticeable mark on our society.

Children are growing up without fathers and the effects of that are devastating. Here are some of the statistics:

- Kids from fatherless homes are 5 times more likely to be poor and 10 times more likely to be extremely poor.
- They are 2 times more likely to be high school drop-outs.
- Girls are 3 times more likely to be unwed, teenage mothers
- 90% of runaways come from fatherless environment
- 3 out of 4 teenage suicides come from fatherless homes
- 70% of men in prison come from homes without a father

As I look across the congregation this morning, I am so thankful for the Godly fathers who are stepping up and making Christ the center of their lives and homes.

Many of you here are not just fathers to your own children, but are also spiritual fathers and figure-heads of the church family here at VCC.

Bill Saltzman, Leo Charon, Mike Walker, Curtis Smith, Chris Kinzel and Bryan Tebbutt, just to name a few.

I'm thankful to them.

Our best role model, however, is Jesus.

In John 17:12, the attributes of the great protector are called out.

Jesus came to save, to bless, to redeem and protect. The whole focus of Jesus last moments with his disciples was protection. He wanted to protect them spiritually from discouragement, so

he told them about what was going to happen with him. He promised to send the Holy Spirit as the comforter and counselor to help them.

In John 18, we read that Jesus wanted to protect them physically as well, so he took control of his own arrest and made sure his disciples are not involved with the torturous night and day that follows.

That meant that Jesus had to endure the mockery and agonizing trip to Calvary alone. Why did he do this? – Because of his desire to protect his disciples.

That is his desire for us as well – he wants to protect us and make us feel secure in his everlasting arms.

Just as an earthy father desire to keep his children and family secure and away from harm.

In Isaiah 41:10, we read “Fear not for I am with you, be not dismayed for I am your God; I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will help you; I will uphold you with the right-hand of righteousness.”

When we put our lives in His hands, Jesus will be our security and we can be free from fear.

Often we panic when we face situations that are out of our control. It is in such times we must remind ourselves that what is too strong for us to handle, is not too strong for Christ.

He is our protector and we are safe in his hands.

Remember the song we learned as children: He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands?
He’s got the wind, the rain, the tiny baby in his hands.

We should add to that song: He’s got our future, our children, every circumstance in His hands.

Another fatherly attribute: Jesus is our protector.

Christ wants to bear our burdens and provide our needs. Come to me, he pleads, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.

Cast your cares on me because I care for you.

Just as our earthly fathers want to meet our basic needs of shelter and food, Jesus also was concerned about his followers.

The greatest example of this is Jesus feeding the 5000:

- One day Jesus with his disciples, ministering, and healing.
- At the end of the day, the question arises, what are the people going to eat?
- Jesus not only provided them with spiritual food, but he multiplied 5 loaves and 2 fishes to feed the multitudes.

In John 6:35, Jesus declared I am the Bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.

Christ supplies our physical and spiritual needs.

Another attribute of Jesus is His love.

Romans 8:34 says nothing can separate us from the love of God, not our failures, mistakes, not our cold or lukewarm attitude toward Him. Jesus love us not because we deserve it, but because he chooses to love us.

There is a story about a father who is tucking his son into bed. He asks his son a question: "When does Daddy love you the most? When you have been fighting with your sister and getting into trouble, or when you have been real helpful to Mommy and nice to everyone?" The little boy thought for a moment and then said, "Both times!" Right, the father said, "and do you know why?" The boy replied, "Cause I'm your special guy?"

The boy knew his father loved him no matter what.

There is a song, sung by George Strait about a father's love. The lyrics go like this:

I got sent home from school one day with a shiner on my eye.
Fightin' was against the rules and it didn't matter why.
When dad got home I told that story just like I'd rehearsed.
And then stood there on those tremblin' knees and waited for the worst.

And he said, "Let me tell you a secret about a father's love,
A secret that my daddy said was just between us."
He said, "Daddies don't just love their children every now and then.
It's a love without end, amen, it's a love without end, amen."

When I became a father in the spring of '81
There was no doubt that stubborn boy was just like my father's son.
And when I thought my patience had been tested to the end,
I took my daddy's secret and I passed it on to him.

And he said, "Let me tell you a secret about a father's love,
A secret that my daddy said was just between us."
He said, "Daddies don't just love their children every now and then.
It's a love without end, amen, it's a love without end, amen."

Last night I dreamed I died and stood outside those pearly gates.
When suddenly I realized there must be some mistake.
If they know half the things I've done, they'll never let me in.
And then somewhere from the other side I heard these words again.

"Let me tell you a secret about a father's love,
A secret that my daddy said was just between us."
He said, "Daddies don't just love their children every now and then.
It's a love without end, amen, it's a love without end, amen."

Jesus is our example of how a parent loves their children. When our kids make mistakes or make poor choices, we correct them we walk alongside them we instruct them and sometimes discipline them. We don't love the mistakes or the behavior but we love the child.

We are unconditionally loved children of God.

One of the greatest ways that Jesus demonstrated his love was by his sacrifice of his life at Calvary. Just as a father would lay down their life for their child, Jesus gave his life for us.

He forgives our sins and allows us to start over with a clean slate.

And finally, we take a look at the word EVERLASTING.

Defined as eternal, never-ending and infinite.

Jesus is our everlasting father because:

- Always and forever, we can look to him to provide our needs
- Always and forever, he is our protector
- Always and forever, he is compassionate, forgiving and his mercy never fails.

Jesus cares for you, just like a father cares for his family.

In life, our fathers may not always be able to be there for us, but Jesus is our Everlasting Father.