

**Title:** For Unto Us a Child is born  
**Big Idea:** He rescues those who cry out to Him.  
**Text:** Isaiah 9:6  
**Subject:** Might God (Hero)

Introduction:

**Top Ten “Hero” Movies:**

10. Shrek 2
9. Princess Bride
8. Mr. Smith goes to Washington
7. Incredibles
6. 12 Angry Men
5. To Kill a Mockingbird
4. Glory
3. Saving Private Ryan
2. Star Wars
1. Lord of the Rings

In fact, most stories throughout literature in practically all cultures have a “hero” element to them. **Overwhelming odds, dire situations, mankind on the fringe, families, companies, nations or humanity itself on the verge of extinction. Forces from without, from within or from beyond comes against the plight of humanity and the question before us is who will step in save the day and how will they do it.** We sit on the edge of our seats with popcorn and diet coke in hand wondering how this is going to work itself out.

**Well, the Bible is a “hero” story too.** Mankind is set on a stage of cosmic proportions. His plight is dire. The forces that come against him are overwhelming. His chances slim. I challenge anyone to put the Biblical epic against any “hero” story and you will find that it excels in every way. **The stakes** - Life or death, the survival of mankind and the stake of civilization. **The enemy** - the most diabolical forces in all of the universe. **The hero** - Jesus Christ, the son of God the hope of all mankind. **The means** - His church, that’s you and I.

## **Problem:**

Ironically, the life of some Christ-followers don't match the Biblical reality. The high drama of the Scriptures seems a universe removed from the "big yawn" faith they experience. **It is my perception that many people in church don't feel saved.** In fact, some want to be saved from religious routine and ruts. What I mean is that I am not always sure we, the church leaders, have made a clear case for the need for a Savior. In my opinion, there has been an imbalance of emphasis on **the "good news"** of the Gospel without a clear understanding of **the "bad news."** This is especially true of those of us who grew up in the church. **We feel apart of the establishment and over time, we can feel "entitled" to certain privileges.** I know that is my story. I have been in church so much that I know that it is not just part of my heritage, but my identity. **THAT BEING SAID, JUST BECAUSE SOMEONE ATTENDS CHURCH DOESN'T MEAN THEY HAVE MET OR EVEN NEEDED A "SAVIOR".** Which creates a problem. Am I just a product of my environment? Or have I had truly been rescued from something that would have sunk me? To often, we become Christians because of our environment, not because we have needed a Savior.

## **Preview:**

This morning we inquire upon the name of Christ-child, **"Mighty God"**. **Martin Luther**, the Great Reformer in the 16<sup>th</sup> century interpreted these words as **"HERO OF STRENGTH,"** or **"A GOD OF A HERO,"** or **"HERO-GOD,"** Literally, the meaning here is **"ONE WHO FIGHTS AND CONQUERS LIKE AN INVINCIBLE GOD."** I want us to address two simple questions:

- 1. WHY DO WE NEED A HERO-GOD? WHAT IS EXACTLY WE ARE "SAVED" FROM?**
- 2. HOW DO WE FIND HELP FROM THIS HERO-GOD?**

## History:

King Ahaz has four enemies, two from the north (Israel and Aram) and two from the south (Edom and the Philistines) that would like nothing better than extinguish once and for all the throne of David (see map).

Through the prophet Isaiah, God sends King Ahaz this message: **“It will not take place. It will not happen” (Is. 7:7)** and **“If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all” (Is. 7:9)**. King Ahaz questions **HOW** will this occur.

Prophets are both **forth telling** and **foretelling**.

- a. Forth telling - Covenant Enforcers (going backward in time)
- b. Foretelling - Immediate situation
- c. Foretelling - Coming Messiah - life of Jesus
- d. Foretelling - Day of the Lord - end to time

Through the prophet Isaiah he says:

Is. 9:6 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.

Is. 9:7 Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

**Ahaz has a choice.**

**Will he let God rescue him or will he try to rescue himself?**

**Will he go out on his own and fix it himself or will he trust that his “Hero-God” is not only faithful, but capable?**

**Will he turn to God for help or turn to someone else?**

**I believe you and I have the very same question before us today.**

## #1: WHY DO WE NEED A SAVIOR? WHAT EXACTLY ARE WE SAVED FROM?

### Trinity of evil:

The Bible records three forces that come against all of us: forces from “within”, forces from “without” and forces from “beyond”. Forces from “within” are called “sin”. Forces from “without” are called “the world”. Forces from “beyond” are called “Satan”. This Trinity of evil works in conjunction to debilitate us, to demean us and to ultimately destroy us.

### Sin (Force Within):

Disease of all mankind. Isaiah says “We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all” By nature and by choice we willfully disobey God and go our way. Chuck Colson defines sin as rebellion against the rule of God. The **personal effects** of sin are disastrous: pride, greed, lust, slander, and selfishness. The **relational effects** are even worse: alienation, prejudice and hatred toward one another and even to one’s self. Self-hatred, in my opinion, is more prevalent than cancer in this society and more damaging. The **theological effects** are damning. Separation from God in this world, in the next and for all eternity.

### World (Force Without):

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus described the world in this manner:

Matt. 5:13 “You are the salt of the earth.

Matt. 5:14 “You are the light of the world.

Jesus describes the world we live in two manners: 1) in need of salt and 2) and in need of light. Salt was not used as a spice as much as a preservative in the first century. Without refrigeration, the only way to preserve meat was to rub salt into it. The world is a decaying place. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Law of Thermodynamics affirms this fact.

Everything goes from bad to worse. The world has the stench of rotten meat. Secondly, the world is a dark place. In the shadows of this planet, horrific **individual** and **systemic** evils occur. Corporate greed. Political power. Economic slavery. Note: Jesus calls us to be salt and light. This speaks to the fact we preserve and provide guidance in world. Notice we have to be close to the “decaying meat” to preserve it.

### **Satanic (Force Beyond):**

While putting my daughter Taylor to bed one night, she asked me perhaps the most probing question of my theological career. “When rebelled against God and was cast out of heaven, why did God send him to earth?” In all my years of seminary and Bible school, no one ever addressed that question. I have time this morning to explore this question in depth, but it highlight a good point. Why didn’t God banish Satan to Mars? Why put him next to the object of his creation, you and I? Great questions...saved for another time.

Jesus tells us the job description of the evil one is “to steal, to kill and to destroy” (John 10:10). He plots against our ruin. He tries to impede the blessing of God in our lives. He sows seeds of discord, hatred, bitterness and wrath. His actual name, Satan, means accuser or slanderer which in itself shows insight into how ill words can have a sinister menace beyond them.

**Which one has the greatest influence?**

**{Computer story}**

**Calvin:**

With good reason does he call him *strong* or *mighty*, because our contest is with the devil, death, and sin, (Ephesians 6:12,) enemies too powerful and strong, by whom we would be immediately vanquished, if the *strength* of Christ had not

rendered us invincible. Thus we learn from this title that there is in Christ abundance of protection for defending our salvation, so that we desire nothing beyond him; for he is *God*, who is pleased to show himself *strong* on our behalf.

## #2: HOW THEN DO WE FIND HELP FROM THIS “HERO-GOD”?

My story:

*In 1985, in my first year in college, after I committed my life to Christ my life began to change in amazing ways. Rather than just being a part of the decoration in church, someone who just showed up and did the religious routine week after week, I felt as if Jesus asked me personally, “Will you do it for Me?” I said, “Yes, Lord, I will do it for You.” After that moment, I found a new motive in my Christian walk. I looked forward to school chapels and Sunday morning church service. I devoured the Scriptures. I began to do prayer walks in the morning. I discovered the power of corporate prayer and even began my first short-term missions trip.*

*Yet, God was pruning me from a false identity. In high school, I was able to quietly achieve. A’s became the norm. However, the demands of an engineering degree pushed me beyond my abilities. I just couldn’t keep up to the level I was used to. Because of this, I began to cheat. First homework, then quizzes and finally, tests. Ironically, I was leading prayer meetings and Bible studies at the time. Let me tell you, there is nothing more miserable than a Christ-follower who lives a shadow life.*

**In this shadow life I faced all 3 foes. I realized now more than ever, I was a sinner who stole answers, lied about who I was, and tried to pretend a spiritual front. I gave in to the inside force of sin and allowed it to dictate terms of my life. I also bought into the lie of this world that success is being at the top. In high school, I was at the top. In college I was just average. My very identity was being reshaped. The enemy of my soul not only tempted me to take of the “forbidden fruit”, he**

tormented with **shame, guilt and condemnation**. I hated myself, my situation and my life. I needed help, someone to save me from the course I was on.

After a year and a half of hypocrisy, I came across the verse **James 5:16**.

**“Confess your sins (not your needs) to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed.”** I knew I needed help in overcoming this habit so:

1. I went to my study partner, Arnold, and confessed everything. He was small in stature (being Japanese) but mighty in prayer. He laid hands on me and we prayed.
2. I felt such relief, but I sensed I needed to go to my teachers. Each one provided grace and a road for accountability as I humbled myself before them.
3. I started carrying a Bible with me to class and then sat on the front row. It is difficult to cheat when you have your Bible on your desk.
4. Finally, I prayed with Arnold before each homework assignment, quiz and test and committed these tasks as acts of worship to my God.

*You can't make up 18 months of lost education quickly. Even with the pressure on, I resolved to submit to my help no matter the cost. I told myself that I would rather get F's with Jesus rather than A's with Satan. I spent the next 3 years relearning what I had missed In the midst of this, I was elected Student Body President and was also put on academic probation. My grades plummeted because I was behind from a 3.7 to a 1.8. If I didn't get my grades up, I would be suspended. By the grace of God of God I graduated with a 2.9. Through this hour of weakness, I met a Mighty God who delivered me from me.*

**Confess your faults**      +      **Pray**      =      **Healing**  
**w/ one another**              **w/ one another**

## Cycle of Healing:

1. Satan tries to destroy us
2. We are wounded and unable to function
3. We seek healing (doctor's, counselors, support groups, friends, prayer)
4. We learn that our identity is IN CHRIST, not what happens to us
5. Our wound becomes a new ministry to others

2Cor. 1:3 ¶ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort,

2Cor. 1:4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

6. Satan regrets he ever touched us

## Conclusion:

We serve a “Hero-God” who loves to rescue us. May I suggest to you that when you look into that manger scene this year, realize that the context of Christ-child coming to earth is one of a “rescue mission.” Humanity in peril, the focus of the disease of sin, a world of selfishness and Satanic onslaught. No power on earth or of this world can save him. Only the Christ-child.

2Cor. 1:10 He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us,

Notice the verb tenses. Past...Present...Future.

2Cor. 1:10 And he did it, rescued us from certain doom. *And* he’ll do it again, rescuing us as many times as we need rescuing.

Our God rescues those who cry out to Him.

If there is no confession, there is no healing.

If there is no confession, there is no change.

If there is no confession, we find ourselves unable to move on.