

NAMES OF JESUS
Everlasting Father
Advent Worship Series – Week 3
December 14, 2008

WORSHIP SERVICE OUTLINES
 Each worship outline contains all elements needed for your worship service. The order of each service presented is only a *suggestion*. No doubt changes will be needed to accommodate the flow and worship style of your corps. The outlines are flexible and allow opportunities to “cut and paste” as needed. If you are blessed with instrumental or vocal music resources, you may find there is more structured material here than needed. It is recommended that the headings of each section of the service be included in the bulletin.

Announcements and Offering

“...and His Name shall be called...Everlasting Father”

Call to Worship:

El Olam is the Hebrew name for the God who has no beginning and no end, the God for whom a day is like a thousand years and a thousand years are like a day. His plans stand firm forever, plans to give you a future full of hope.

Is it any wonder that the Eternal God wants a people he can love eternally? Is it so hard to fathom that God’s love is stronger than death? Is it impossible to believe what can happen to souls created to be wide and deep enough for God to dwell in? No wonder Scripture tells us that the Lord has set eternity in our hearts.

(Praying the Names of God, pages 51, 54, 56, 59)

SB#116 – O come, all ye faithful	TB-496 – Adeste Fideles	HTD3 –T1 (3 vs.)
HC#140 – O Come, All Ye Faithful	HC-140	HCD12-T20
Additional Optional Songs		
SB#47 – O God, our help in ages past	TB-113 – St. Ann	HTD5-T18 (4 vs.)
HC#151 – Fairest Lord Jesus	HC-151	HCD14-T11
HC#121 – Joyful, Joyful	HC-121	HCD11-T11
HC#141 – All Hail the Power	HC-141	HCD13 –T11
HC#149 – In Christ Alone	HC-149	HCD13-T19
HC#157 – How Great is Our God	HC-157	HCD14-T17
HC#241 – Crown him with many crowns	HC-241	HCD23-T11

Advent Candle Lighting:

Solo 1: For a thousand years in your sight

Are like a day that has just gone by,
Or like a watch in the night...
The length of our days is seventy years—
Or eighty, if we have the strength;
Yet their span is but trouble and sorrow,
For they quickly pass, and we fly away...

Solo 2: Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.
(Psalm 90:4, 10, 12)

Solo 1: Do you not know?
Have you not heard?
The Lord is the everlasting God,
The Creator of the ends of the earth.
He will not grow tired or weary,
And his understanding no one can fathom.
He gives strength to the weary
And increases the power of the weak. (Isaiah 40:28-29)

Solo 2: The truth of the eternity of the Messiah is something that has come under continuous attack for centuries. But the inescapable fact is that all groups who reject the eternity of Christ also reject His deity. The two are inseparable! If Jesus is not eternal, He is not God—and vice versa. Yet Isaiah said that when Messiah came, He would be the physical embodiment of the Everlasting Father.

[Light 3rd Advent candle.]

HC#15 – Father, We Love You	HC-15	HCD1A-T15
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Drama: Everlasting Father

Hallowed Be Thy Name

Responsive Scripture:

Leader: The symbolic use of the word *father* was an ancient Hebraism for “possessor of.” In Isaiah 9:6 the Messiah is described as both a Son and a Father. He became a child in time through the incarnation, but He is the Father and possessor of eternity. He inhabits and possesses eternity.

All: *“For this is what the high and lofty One says—he who lives forever, whose name is holy: ‘I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.’”* (Isaiah 57:15)

Leader: **His name is eternal.**

All: *“May his name endure forever; may it continue as long as the sun. All nations will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed.”*
(Psalm 72:17)

Leader: **He is the eternal provider.**

All: *“He said to me, ‘It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life.’”* (Revelation 21:6)

Leader: He is eternal in all that He is and all that He does! This implies several crucial truths claimed for God’s Messiah in both Old and New Testaments. **He is preexistent.**

All: *“Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.”* (Psalm 90:2)

Leader: **He is self-existent.**

All: In Exodus 3 we find the name “I AM.” This name describes and defines the God who is. He is totally independent of His creation, and totally independent of time.

Leader: The ability of Christ to be a timeless source of fatherly protection and provision is claimed in a number of ways in the New Testament. His character is described as eternally consistent and unchanging. Hebrews 13:8 says:

All: *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”*

Leader: John the Baptist, whose birth preceded Jesus, still recognized the eternity of Christ when he said:

All: *“This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me surpassed me because he was before me.’”* (John 1:30) He is the eternal One!

Leader: The self-existence of God’s Messiah means that He will not leave us, as all earthly fathers eventually do. The Eternal God took upon Himself the limitations of a human body so that He could bring us into an everlasting relationship with Himself.

(A Timeless Name: “Everlasting Father” from “Our Daily Bread,” Christmas Edition, 2007)

HC#170 – There is None Like You	HC-170	HCD15-T20
Additional Optional Songs		

HC#125 – I Draw Near to You	HC-125	HCD11-T15
HC#173 – In this quiet moment	HC-173	HCD 16- T13
HC#205 – Closer Still	HC-205	HCD19 – T15
HC#213 – In the presence of Jehovah	HC-213	HCD20 – T13
HC#219 – King of kings, majesty	HC-219	HCD20 – T19
HC#220 – Incarnate	HC-220	HCD20 – T20

Prayer:

Lord, your love and faithfulness endure forever. Help me to live my daily life with the strength that comes from knowing that I am going to live with you forever. Thank you for loving me even when I was “still a long way off.” You showed your gracious, fatherly love even when I bore little resemblance to you. Strengthen my identity as your child and help me to glorify your name by reflecting your character. Amen.

(Praying the Names of God, page 319)

Message – Our Everlasting Father

SB#101 – Thou didst leave thy throne	TB-112 - Margaret	HTD10-T6 (4 vs.)
Additional Optional Songs		
HC#120 – In the Manger	HC-120	HCD10-T20
HC#220 – Incarnate	HC-220	HCD20-T20

Benediction:

Lord Jesus, we come with praise and thanksgiving for the marvel and miracle of your birth we celebrate this season. Come once again to us this hour that we may rejoice because you have been born in our hearts. We pray that in all our labors, in all our relationships, in all of our life, you will live and love through us, in all our seasons of life, as our Savior and Lord. In your name, we pray. Amen.

(Colonel Henry Gariepy)

HC#180 – Starry Night	HC-180	HCD16-T20
Vocal Benediction Options		
SB#116 – O come, all ye faithful	TB-496 – Adeste Fideles	HTD3 –T1 (3 vs.)
HC#140 – O Come, All Ye Faithful	HC-140	HCD12-T20

Week # 3	
DRAMA	
Everlasting Father	
By Martyn Scott Thomas	
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Topic:	Love
Scripture:	Psalm 72:17, 90:2; Isaiah 57:15
Synopsis:	A son questions his father about love.
Characters:	Eric – an eighteen year old boy. Gerald – his father.
Props/Costumes:	Casual dress. A chair and a newspaper for Gerald.
Setting:	The living room of Gerald's house.
Running Time:	3 minutes.

[Gerald is seated in his chair, reading the newspaper. Eric enters, stands behind the chair and questions Gerald, who continues to read his paper.]

- Eric:** Dad, do you love me?
- Gerald:** Eric, you know I love you.
- Eric:** I mean, do you really love me?
- Gerald:** Yes, I really love you.
- Eric:** Even when I mess things up?
- Gerald:** Yes, I really love you, even when you mess things up.
- Eric:** What about when I was three and wouldn't eat my peas?
- Gerald:** I loved you then. And you still don't eat your peas.
- Eric:** What about when I was six and ran away from home?
- Gerald:** You went next door for fifteen minutes. But yes, I still loved you.
- Eric:** What about when I was eight and told you I hated you and locked myself in my room?
- Gerald:** Even though it hurt to hear those words, I loved you then.
- Eric:** How about when I was twelve and took \$20.00 from your dresser?
- Gerald:** If you would have asked, I would have given it to you. But yes, I still loved you then.

Eric: Did you love me last year when I drove the car over the mailbox?

Gerald: I don't think the mailman was pleased with you, but I loved you even then.

Eric: Will you love me when I'm older and it's time to move out of the house?

Gerald: More than you can know.

Eric: Hey!

Gerald: [*putting paper down*] Why all these questions? Are you in some kind of trouble?

Eric: No, no trouble. But, it's nice to know that even when I don't do the right thing, my dad still loves me.

Gerald: [*stands*] Eric, before you were born, I loved you. I have always been and will always be your Father. And, no matter what happens, good or bad, I will always love you.

Eric: Thanks, Dad. I'll always love you, too. [*They hug*]

[*Blackout*]

NAMES OF JESUS
Advent Sermon – Week 3
December 14, 2008

Our Everlasting Father
by Tom Shepard

Text: Isaiah 9:6

Three weeks ago we started a series of sermons based on Isaiah 9:6. Let's go ahead and read our focal passage at this time.

*"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, NIV).*

This prophecy of the coming Christ was given hundreds of years before his birth. This prophecy of this child's birth tells us that this child would be special—that the child would be unique. Of course, the one that Isaiah is speaking of is Jesus. According to Isaiah chapter nine, he would be called:

Wonderful Counselor
Mighty God
Everlasting Father
The Prince of Peace

Today we will look at Christ as our Everlasting Father.

To tell you the truth, I have some trouble when it comes to using this term for Jesus. I have no problem believing that Jesus is eternal, but I do have some trouble calling him "Father." Here's the reason: There are three persons in the trinity—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Three in one; three persons, yet one God. Now I'm not going to discuss the trinity in depth in this sermon, but if I call Jesus our Eternal Father, it creates a dilemma in my mind because we already have God the Father. There is but one Father in the Godhead. There is but one Father in the trinity. The Holy Spirit is not the Father, Jesus is not the Father—the Father is the Father! This troubles my mind. So why does Isaiah call Jesus, "Eternal Father?"

I did some study, and this is what I have come up with. Here is an option.

What title do we as Americans give to George Washington? We call him the "Father of Our Nation." In fact, we call those people who were here as our nation was being formed, "Our Founding Fathers." We have no problem calling them "fathers" of our nation because they were involved in its conception. They were there as our nation was being formed.

Interesting! Could that be what the title—Eternal Father—is referring to?

I dug a little deeper and here is what I found. Some of the every early translations of the Bible rendered the title Eternal Father as: “Father of the future age” (Vulgate). It could also be translated, “The Father of eternity” (Gill).

When I understand Christ’s title in this sense, it is much less puzzling to me and much less uncomfortable to call Jesus my Eternal Father. I know that Christ has and will live forever. I know that it is Christ who will reign as King of kings and Lord of lords in eternity. I know it is Christ who has given us the ability to have eternal life. In this sense he is truly the Father of Eternity. It is through his sacrifice that I will be able to live forever. He is the Father of Eternity.

I find in the scripture that Christ has always existed. Forever! Look with me at John chapter one:

“In the beginning was the Word (Jesus), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men... The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:1-4, 14, NIV).

What the Bible teaches is that Jesus is eternal. He was in the beginning. He was involved in the creation of all things. In fact, nothing exists that he did not create. He was with God. He is God, yet he became man. He is the Father of Creation. He is truly our Eternal Father.

Today as we look at Jesus being our Eternal Father, we are going to look at three qualities of what Eternal Father means for us. The first is:

I. Christ’s CHARACTER does not change

The contemporary Christian composer and artist Chris Tomlin’s song “Forever” is right on target in praising God as our Eternal Father for his goodness, faithfulness, love, and mercy. The words found in that song are:

Give thanks to the Lord
Our God and King
His love endures forever.
For He is good, He is above all things
His love endures forever.

From the rising to the setting sun
His love endures forever.
By the grace of God

We will carry on
His love endures forever.

Sing praise, sing praise.
Sing praise, sing praise.
Yeah!
Forever God is faithful
Forever God is strong
Forever God is with us
Forever
Forever.

Here is a fact. Since Jesus is part of the trinity—Jesus being God—the character of Jesus does not change. His mercy, his love, his grace, his forgiveness does not change. From the dawning of the day to the setting of the sun, his character is unchanging. From the beginning of time into eternity, Jesus' character never alters. Look at what the Bible says in Hebrews 13:8:

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8, NIV).

One of the stories that I turn to – time and time again is the story of the prodigal son. Although it is a simple story, it has so many aspects that it is amazing.

You know the story. The son goes off into a far country and squanders all his money. And when he runs out of money he runs out of friends and ends up in a hog pen, eating from the slop that is fed to the pigs. This is the most humiliating place a Jewish boy could possibly be.

As he sits there he starts thinking, “How many of my father’s hired men have food to spare? And here I am, starving to death. I will set out and go back to my father.” How could He think such thoughts? Why does he think he will be welcomed back home? How could he come to that conclusion? Here is what I think.

It is because the son knew the character of the Father. He knew what kind of father he had. He knew that the character of the father did not change. The relationship might never be the same – but he knew the character of the father was consistent. He knew that the father was full of forgiveness. He knew that the father was full of mercy. He knew that the father was full of love. He had hope that the door home would be open to him. He knew that his relationship with the father had changed - but he also knew that his father showed mercy, love and kindness.

How did he know that? I can just imagine that all through the time the son was growing up, the father had shown love to his son - because that was the character of the father. He might have communicated his love to the son also. He may even have said, “No matter how far you go, you can always come back home.”

So the prodigal said, "I will say to my father, 'I have sinned against heaven and against you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired men.'" I think this was a speech he practiced every step of his way back home. He had it down pat.

But before he could blurt it out his father had run to him, thrown his arms around him and kissed him. He had no fear of expressing love, did he?

You know, the beautiful part is that our Eternal Father always leaves the door open for us to come home again. No matter how far we roam Jesus is waiting to throw his arms around you - to assure you of his abiding love.

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." Hebrews 13:8 (HCSB)

The second point I want to make is:

2. Christ's COMPASSION does not change.

Throughout the gospels we find that Jesus was full of compassion.

"But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with COMPASSION for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd." Matthew 9:36 (NKJV)

"Now a leper came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, "If You are willing, You can make me clean." Then Jesus, moved with COMPASSION, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed." Mark 1:40-41 (NKJV)

Just a few minutes ago I related the story of the prodigal son. One of the things I had never noticed before is found in Luke chapter fifteen and verse twenty:

"But while the son was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with COMPASSION. He ran, threw his arms around his neck, and kissed him." Luke 15:20 (HCSB)

Did you catch that – the father became filled with compassion! It became his motivation for his movement. He got up and ran to his son!

I went and looked up the word "compassion". It means:

Suffering with another; painful sympathy; a sensation of sorrow excited by the distress or misfortunes of another. Compassion is a mixture of passion, compounded with love and sorrow.

When Jesus sees us in our distress He has compassion on us. When He sees the mess we have made of our lives He is moved with compassion. When life has been hard - when

we have been dealt a bad hand - when disaster after disaster follows us around like a puppy – when the whole world seems to be falling in around us - God is moved with compassion. The compassion of Jesus moves Him to rescue us. The compassion of Jesus moves Him to save us. The compassion of Jesus does not change.

We live in a world where we can get broken up, scratched up, dinged up. We get dents and burses – sometimes physically and sometimes emotionally. We live in a world where we can get hurt. We can have broken bones, broken relationships, and broken hearts. That’s the world in which we live. I am glad that there is One who will have compassion for me. I am glad there is One who is moved because of my suffering. I am glad there is One who is moved with compassion because He loves me. That one is Jesus – our Eternal Father.

Scott Wesley Brown affirms the compassion of our Eternal Father in his song “He Will Carry You”:

There is no problem too big He cannot solve it:
There is no mountain too tall He cannot move it.
There is no storm too dark God cannot calm it:
There is no sorrow too deep He cannot soothe it.

If He carried the weight of the world upon His shoulders,
I know, my brother, that He will carry you.
If He carried the weight of the world upon His shoulders,
I know, my sister, that He will carry you.
He said, “Come unto Me all who are weary, and I will give you rest.”

Not only does Christ’s character and compassion NOT change, but:

3. Christ’s COMMITMENT does not change.

Folks in the home I grew up in – my father was always there. He never abandoned us. He never walked out on us. I know this is not the case in some families – but it is the case in my family history - my father was always there - and it is the case in your heavenly family too.

I remember a few years back - I was teaching through the book – "Purpose Driven Life". We had just studied the chapter that talks about – “I Am Not An Accident”. One of the members of our church came up to me and said that that chapter had helped her deal with her self image. She went on to tell me that when she was born her mother had given her up for adoption. Even though she had grown up in a loving home - in a real sense she felt that she had been abandoned by her birth mother. Because of this event she had always questioned her worth – her value. As she read the chapter – “I Am Not An Accident” it helped her realize that she was loved and that she did have value and worth. Her Heavenly Father – her Eternal Father never considered her to be an accident. She realized that He would never abandon her.

Folks, eternal means “everlasting” – it means “forever.” When this term is applied to Jesus, it is always a declaration of His faithfulness, His trustworthiness, His goodness, His love and His mercy. Isaiah calls the coming Christ our Eternal Father. The Prophet Jeremiah also testifies to our Lord’s eternal faithfulness, trustworthiness, goodness, love and mercy in Lamentations 3:22-26.

Jerusalem had fallen into the hands of the Babylonians, the Temple had been looted and destroyed, and the people are grieving in captivity, but their Eternal Father had neither forgotten nor deserted them.

Jeremiah praises the Everlasting Father for His faithfulness when he says:

“Because of the Lord’s faithful love we do not perish, for His mercies never end. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness! I say: The Lord is my portion, therefore I will put my hope in Him. The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, to the person who seeks Him. It is good to wait quietly for deliverance from the Lord.”
Lamentations 3:22-26 (HCSB)

God has promised to commit Himself to us and that commitment never changes – it is eternal. Look at what God says to you in Jeremiah chapter twenty nine:

“I know what I’m doing. I have it all planned out —plans to take care of you, not abandon you, plans to give you the future you hope for.” Jeremiah 29:11 (MSG)

Jesus is our Eternal Father. He is always there for you – He will not abandon you. His character does not change. His compassion does not change. His commitment to you does not change. Turn to Him. Worship Him. Commit yourself to Him - today.