

NAMES OF JESUS
Wonderful Counselor
Advent Worship Series – Week 1
November 30, 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.

“...and His Name shall be called...Wonderful Counselor”

Introduction to Advent Series:

We come to understand people by their names and titles. King David, the man after God’s own heart, is better understood by a study of his various names or titles. Knowing David is described as a shepherd, warrior, king, poet and musician helps us understand his character and gives us insight into David the man. (*My Father’s Names*, pages 13-14)

Why does God have so many names? Just as white light is made up of seven different rays or colors, so God is made up of different attributes that are illuminated by different names. We’ll take these names one at a time during this Advent season. The first of them is.... “...and His Name shall be called...Wonderful Counselor.”

(A Guiding Name: “Wonderful Counselor” from “Our Daily Bread,” Christmas Edition, 2007)

HC#121 – Joyful, Joyful	HC-121	HCD11-T11
Additional Optional Songs		
SB#114 – Light of the world	TB-653 – Here I am to Worship	
HC#146 – Here I am to Worship	HC-146	HCD13-T16
SB#133 – Wonderful counselor	TB-859 – The Light Has Come	HCD1-T10
HC#10 – The Light Has Come	HC-10	

Announcements and Offering

Call to Worship:

No Old Testament prophet had more to say about the promised Messiah of Israel than the prophet Isaiah. In a period spanning at least 64 years, Isaiah (whose name means “the Salvation of Jehovah”) was God’s spokesman to Israel. Isaiah predicted a coming

messianic age marked by world peace. He foresaw a world government in the last days that would turn the eyes of the international community on Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:1-4). He also described the coming of a Servant-Ruler who would bring a mysterious blend of power and suffering (Isaiah 53; 61:1-3). But the character of this coming Servant is most clearly stated in Isaiah 9:6, where the prophet declared:

“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.”

Advent Candle Lighting:

Leader: A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

Solo 1: The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord—

Leader: And he will delight in the fear of the Lord. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears;

Solo 2: But with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.

Leader: He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

Solo 1: Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. (Isaiah 11:1-5)

All: He comes, the broken heart to bind,
The wounded soul to cure,
And with the treasures of his grace,
To enrich the humble poor.
(SASB#81, v. 3)

Leader: God has provided us with a Wonderful Counselor and we celebrate his coming with the lighting of our first Advent candle.

[Light 1st Advent candle]

SB#104 – Come, thou long-expected Jesus	TB-371 Hyfrydol (2 written verses combine to make 1 verse with this tune, no chorus)	none
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Additional Optional Songs		
SB#108 – Hark! The herald angels sing	TB-270 – Hark! The Herald Angels Sing	HTD4-T5 (3 vs.)
HC#141 – All Hail the Power	HC-141	HCD13-T11

Hallowed Be Thy Name

Responsive Reading:

Leader: While it is clear that Isaiah was predicting a coming world leader and the inevitability of a messianic age, Isaiah was actually predicting the arrival of the Son of God. Prophetically, Isaiah saw the day when a son of Israel would bear upon His shoulder the weight of the world leadership. In chapter 2, Isaiah predicted that in the last days the house of the Lord would be established in Jerusalem.

All: *“The Lord Himself will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for anymore.”* (Isaiah 2:4)

Reader 1: Those who have bowed their knee to this coming Messiah and Lord can find present encouragement in that future day. While we regard as mythology the image of Atlas bearing on his shoulder the globe of the world, we can see in God’s Messiah a real Lord who can carry the combined weight of all human problems. Inexpressible comfort can be found as we discover that the “shoulders”—which will someday carry the governments of the world—are large enough to bear any personal weight or burden that we bring to Him now.

Leader: Hebrew names are significant. The prophet used a marvelously descriptive set of names to unfold the very essence of the person of the Messiah. The name “Wonderful Counselor” literally translates, “a wonder of a counselor.” But what does it mean?

Reader 1: The first is the word *Wonderful*. The Hebrew word *pala* indicates “something uncommon or out of the ordinary.” The same Hebrew word is used in Psalm 139:6 in just this way:

All: *“Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.”*

Reader 1: It is something miraculous! The problem is that we have a low view of the miraculous, and therefore a limited sense of wonder.

Leader: A real wonder is something beyond human explanation. And the prophet Isaiah declared that the coming Child and Son would be a wonder. This not only describes what He does, it describes who He is.

Reader 1: The second part of this compound description of the coming Messiah is *Counselor*. Long before the Child was ever born, long before the Son was given, Isaiah foretold that God was planning to send a Counselor for the broken-hearted people of the world.

All: *“He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths. The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.”* (Isaiah 2:3)

Leader: And long after Jesus’ entrance into the world we can see that He personified the kind of counsel that will go out from Jerusalem in the last days.

All: *“All this also comes from the Lord Almighty, wonderful in counsel and magnificent in wisdom.”* (Isaiah 28:29)

Leader: When you take all that we know about Christ, it adds up to a marvelous truth—He is the God who is, and who is called a “Wonder of a Counselor.”

(A Guiding Name: “Wonderful Counselor” from “Our Daily Bread,” Christmas Edition, 2007)

Drama: Wonderful Counselor

HC#82 – Jesus, Name Above All Names	HC-82	HCD7-T12
Additional Optional Songs		
HC#117 – Draw Me Close	HC-117	HCD10-T17
HC#159 – Spirit of the Living God	HC-159	HCD14-T19
HC#62 – When God Comes Near	HC-62	HCD5-T12
HC#219 – King of Kings, Majesty	HC-219	HCD20-T19
HC#220 – Incarnate	HC-220	HCD20-T20
HC#226 – I Worship You	HC-226	HCD21-T16

Prayer:

Who is this child? Who is this Wonderful Counselor? He is a man who has walked in our shoes, felt our pains and struggled with our temptations. Moreover, he walks with us now, every step of the way. How could we not love him? O Light of the World, prophesied deliverer of Israel, you have truly come. You are my deliverer and the light of my world as well. With joy I acknowledge your right to every righteous and holy title and to every place of authority. Come, Lord Jesus, Messiah, and rule over us with justice and peace. Do it even now in me. I welcome you gratefully to the throne of my life. Amen.

(The NIV Worship Bible, page 909)

Message – Our Wonderful Counselor

Week # 1

HC#89 – Knowing You	HC-89	HCD7-T19
Additional Optional Songs		
HC#65 – God Will Make a Way	HC-65	HCD5-T15
SB#153 – Thou didst leave thy throne and thy kingly crown	TB-94 – Margaret	HTD10-T6 (4 vs.)
HC#156 – Enter In	HC-156	HCD14-T16
HC#219 – King of Kings, Majesty	HC-219	HCD20-T19
HC#220 – Incarnate	HC-220	HCD20-T20
HC#226 – I Worship You	HC-226	HCD21-T16

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		
HC#140 – O Come, All Ye Faithful	HC-140	HCD12-T20
HC#260 – Go Tell it on the Mountain	HC-15	HCD24-T20

DRAMA Wonderful Counselor By Martyn Scott Thomas © 1998 by Martyn Scott Thomas. All rights reserved. Used by permission.	
Topic:	Prayer
Scripture:	Isaiah 9:6
Synopsis:	A patient seeks emergency counsel.
Characters:	Michael – the patient Counselor (optional, non-speaking)
Props/Costumes:	Casual dress for Michael, a business suit for the Counselor.
Setting:	One or two chairs. Although a monologue, this can be performed with a non-speaking Counselor. The Counselor should be seated in a chair with his back to the congregation. His “lines” are heard only by the Patient, who responds accordingly, pausing between paragraphs.
Running Time:	3 minutes.

[Michael knocks and enters, speaking to the Counselor.]

Michael: Hi. Thanks for seeing me on such short notice. I guess that’s my chair over there [*sits*]. I know it seems like I’ve been in here quite a bit lately, it’s just that . . .

Yes, I know my plan includes unlimited visits, I just don’t want to overdo it. But, as I was saying, things have been pretty rough lately and I just needed to talk to someone. You seemed like the logical choice.

Where do you want me to begin? Work, family, church?

Okay, work. It’s been busy. Actually, it’s always busy, but lately it’s been very busy. It just keeps piling up no matter how hard I work. The more I do, the more there is to do. It can get pretty overwhelming.

Well, usually I keep plugging away, but sometimes, I do nothing. I mean, I look for excuses to get out of the office; errands to run, lunch meetings, home emergencies.

No, it doesn’t help. The work keeps piling up and I feel more and more helpless. Some days, I wonder why I even leave the house.

It’s a great job. I love the company, my boss is super, my co-workers very dedicated; I just get lost sometimes. Can you help me find my way?

My family? They're fine. Carrie's working part-time now. She still gets home before the kids and it gets her out of the house three days a week. The extra money doesn't hurt either.

No. Financially, we're fine. My salary is more than enough. She just likes to have her own money for things. Money is not a problem.

Budget? Kind of. I mean, I know what I'm spending. There's always something left each month for extras.

Mostly stuff for the kids. Mostly clothes for the kids. They're growing so fast. I can't believe Joe's in junior high. Where does the time go?

Well, sure I do. Most Saturdays, we have a chance to do something.

Well, he's usually off with his friends, but we do watch football together on Sundays.

Becky? No, she doesn't like football. I don't know where I failed.

Fourth grade.

Mostly A's. She's a good student; reminds me of her mom.

Well, I try to help her with her homework, when I get home in time.

Most days. But when work is busy; like it is now, it's hard to get home early. I'll make it up to her someday. And to Joe. And to Carrie.

[a little agitated] When I'm not so busy.

I'm sorry. Can you help me find my way?

Church? Yes, I still go. Didn't you see me there last week?

Well, a little late, but I did hear the message.

Okay, I heard most of the message, but it was an early game and that's my time with Joe

Well, I suppose I could tape part of the game, but I don't know how to program my VCR.

Ask Becky? Very funny, but I get your point.

It's funny. You haven't said a lot today. But, you've helped me quite a bit. You know me so well. Almost like you know what I'm doing to day, even before I do.

I always feel so much better after these visits.

Are you sure? Any time? I don't want to overdo it, you know.

I can't overdo it? That's good to know. That's very good to know.
[Michael stands and turns to exit]

Tomorrow? Sure, I can make it tomorrow. But, what if I need to see you sooner?

Always open. That's good to know. That's very good to know.

[Blackout]

NAMES OF JESUS
Advent Sermon – Week 1
November 30, 2008

Our Wonderful Counselor
by Tom Shepard

Text: Isaiah 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" (Isaiah 9:6, NIV).*

This prophecy of the coming Christ that was given hundreds of years before his birth tells us that the child that was to be born would have some very amazing names. Of course the one that Isaiah is speaking of is Jesus. According to Isaiah he would be called:

Wonderful Counselor
The Mighty God
The Everlasting Father
The Prince of Peace

Over the next four weeks we will look at each of these four names in detail. Today we will look at Christ as our Wonderful Counselor.

Let me say right up front that in some translations this title is separated with a comma – Wonderful *and* Counselor. The translators believe that each title should be looked at separately. Some translations put both words together to come up with one title – Wonderful Counselor. It is important to know that in the original Hebrew there were no punctuation marks. I do believe that Jesus is wonderful. He is Lord of lords and King of kings. He is the creator of the universe. His name is above every name – and at his name every knee will bow and every tongue will confess – that Jesus Christ is Lord. I know that he is wonderful, but for today I want to examine Jesus as our Wonderful Counselor.

Later in the book of Isaiah we find that the author speaks of Jesus again when he says:

"The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord" (Isaiah 11:2, NIV).

The Bible places a high premium on wise counsel. Wisdom and counsel are important. Let's quickly look at two verses that talk about wise counsel.

"A wise man will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel" (Proverbs 1:5, NKJV).

“The counsel of the Lord stands forever; the plans of His heart from generation to generation” (Psalms 33:11, HCSB).

Counseling today is at an all time high in our society. From Dr. Phil, to David Ramsey, to Oprah Winfrey, people are seeking advice. There’s certainly nothing wrong with seeking advice and counseling when you have a particular need in your life. In fact, the Bible encourages it. However, we must not lose sight of the fact that we, as believers, have access to most wonderful counselor imaginable – Jesus Christ.

What makes him a Wonderful Counselor? I could list characteristics all morning, but let me give you three.

I. He UNDERSTANDS Your Struggles

In Hebrews chapter four we find:

“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin” (Hebrews 4:15, NIV).

Jesus gets it. He understands it. He can relate to you. Sometimes when we are going through a difficult situation and someone says, “I understand what you are going through...” it seems empty because unless they have been through the same situation, how can they possibly understand our problems? But Jesus does understand. He knows exactly what you are going through. When you come to him in need of counsel, he knows your situation. He knows your heart and he knows your mind. Because of this fact, verse sixteen of Hebrews chapter four tells us that we should: *“approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us at the proper time”* (Hebrews 4:16, HCSB).

Have you ever been betrayed? He has. Have you ever been wrongly accused? He has. Have people ever gossiped about you? Have you ever suffered physical pain? Have you ever been in physical need? Have you ever felt lonely? Have you ever suffered loss? Have you ever been afraid? Have you ever felt that you have reached the bottom and there is no way up? He understands.

The Bible tells us that: *“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us”* (John 1:14, NIV). Jesus was fully human like you and me. He knows how mean people can be. He knows how rough life can get. He understands your struggles.

Another characteristic that makes Jesus a Wonderful Counselor is...

II. He CARES For You

1 Peter 5:7 (CEV) says, *“God cares for you, so turn all your worries over to him.”*

Some counselors only care as long as you can pay the bill. Not Jesus! He cares about you as a person. He cares about your character. He cares about your spiritual growth and emotional welfare. He cares about the pain you suffer. He considers you of value and of worth. Look at what it says in Matthew 6:26. Jesus is speaking and he says:

“Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?” (Matthew 6:26, HCSB).

Aren't you worth more than the birds that fly around? God thinks so! He thinks you have value. He thinks that you have worth—he thinks that you are worth a lot. He thinks so much of you that he sent his son to die for you – to rescue you from your pain and suffering – to give you new hope, new life and salvation. God cares for YOU!

He cares so much that he will help you with your problems. He will help you deal with them. That's why he is called Wonderful Counselor. He's not going to leave us to fend for ourselves. You have probably heard it said, "God helps those who help themselves." The truth of the matter is when you have reached the bottom, "God helps those who can't help themselves." When you see no way out, God steps in—if you call on him. Here is another of his promises:

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28, NIV).

Folks that is a promise! He will not turn his back on us. He will not abandon us. God cares for us. Another characteristic of Jesus our Wonderful Counselor is:

III. He COMMITS Himself to You

Jesus wants to have a personal relationship with each of us. Look at what the Bible says in John 10:27:

“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me” (John 10:27, NIV).

This verse tells me that Jesus speaks to us. If we have a personal relationship with Jesus, he is committed to us and he talks to us.

How does Jesus speak to us today?

A. Through the BIBLE

Look at what it says in Psalm 119:105: *“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path”* (Psalms 119:105, NIV).

God speaks to us through his written word.

B. Through the HOLY SPIRIT

Jesus says in John, “*But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth*” (John 16:13, NIV).

You say, "Well I have never heard the Holy Spirit talk to me." Let me ask you, have you ever done something wrong and felt guilty about it? Good! That's the Holy Spirit speaking to you. Part of his job is to keep us on track. He does that sometimes with conviction.

Have you ever had a verse of scripture come to you out of the blue? That may be the Holy Spirit trying to teach you something.

Have you ever thought about a friend or family member and wondered how they were doing? That may just be the Holy Spirit prompting you to send a card, make a call or write a letter. You see, the Holy Spirit still speaks today.

The third way God speaks today is:

C. Through the CHURCH

The church is the world's largest support group. Every single person in this room this morning has problems. Turn to the person on your left and say, “You've got problems!”

Turn to the person on your right and say, “You've got problems!”

Now turn to God and say, "I've got problems!"

There—don't you feel better? We are all just fellow struggles trying to make it through and give God glory in the process.

I've thought about buying a sign to hang over the front entrance that says, “No perfect people allowed.” The church is to be a community where people can be open and honest about their struggles, where we can work together to overcome our problems.

Did you know that Moses had a big problem? Back when he was leading the nation of Israel through the wilderness, he was wearing himself out. He was busy, busy, busy. Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came to him with some advice. He said Moses, “Here is what you need to do: select some good men and delegate some of your authority to them. Put some in charge of a thousand. Put some in charge of a hundred. Put some in charge of fifty and put some in charge of ten. If you do this, God will honor you” (Exodus 18:19-21).

Do you know what Moses did? He listened! He took Jethro's advice!

Proverbs has this to say about advice:

“Refuse good advice and watch your plans fail; take good counsel and watch them succeed” (Proverbs 15:22, MSG).

When someone gives you good advice, take it! Seek out good sound advice. Find a fellow Christian who is wise; who is living a life to honor God. Ask them what they think. Ask two or three strong Christians. Seek out wise counsel. The church is here to help you be successful. God can use other believers to speak to you—so listen!

I want to return to the thought that God is committed to you. We started reading from John chapter ten a minute ago. Let’s continue on:

“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand” (John 10:27-28, NIV).

Did you know that when you commit yourself to God, he commits himself to you? When you give yourself to him, he promises to hold on to you. Look at John 10:28 again, and circle the words: *“No one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand.”* When God says “no one,” he means “NO ONE!” God will not allow anyone to keep you away from his love.

Paul understood this fact when he wrote in the book of Romans:

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38-39, NIV).

Folks, nothing can separate us from the love of God, because if you have committed yourself to him, he has committed himself to you.

Let me give you a challenge this week: make an appointment this week with the Wonderful Counselor. Sit down with him. Open your heart up to him. Tell him what is going on in your life. Believe me—there is no heartache that he can’t mend. There is no problem he can’t solve. Why? Because he is our Wonderful Counselor.