

Last Sunday we began our Advent sermon series based on Isaiah 9:6: “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given... and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” We focused on the first description given to Jesus in that verse: “Wonderful Counselor.” Our Lord bears that title because people heard how He spoke wise and gracious words with great authority. Jesus spoke as though He were God **Himself!** Jesus’ counsel **is** wonderful because His teaching is the teaching of **God**.

From this, we learned that this is why it’s so important for us to hear, read, study, and believe Holy Scripture. Jesus said it Himself John chapter 8, “If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (vv. 31-32). Because of Jesus, our Wonderful Counselor’s, miraculous birth, life, death, and resurrection, we are set free from sin. We are set free from death. We are set free from the power of the devil

And now we come to today’s theme which is the second title given to the Christ in Isaiah 9:6 , and that is “Mighty God.” This title goes along **perfectly** with another other prophecy we heard last week and that one was from Isaiah chapter 7 verse 14. There we hear that the child to be born to the virgin will be called “Immanuel” and that means “**God** with us”. The Virgin’s Son, Jesus, truly **is** “Mighty God” because He’s the Son of God come in human flesh.

In fact, the first three verses of the Gospel of John accentuate this very point: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.” (Jn 1:1-3) Beautiful words! Amazing Words! But what do they mean?

Well, “The Word” is one of the titles **John** the Gospel writer gives to Jesus. That’s because Jesus speaks to us on behalf of His Father. John says “the Word” was **with** God and “the Word” **was** God. How can **this** be? John is here teaching what later Christians would call the Holy Trinity; that, there is only one God, and He exists as three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

To put it simply, Christ, the Son of God was with the Father and the Spirit “in the beginning.” Now, let’s hear from John as he goes on to write just a few verses later: “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14)

By those words John is referencing the fact that the Son of God took on human flesh in the womb of the virgin Mary. And **this** takes us to our Gospel reading for today, which also is found in John’s Gospel.

In John chapter **5**, we read about Jesus performing miracles on what day of the week? The Sabbath. The day when God's people were **supposed** to rest from their work so they could focus on God's work for them as Creator and Savior. But Jesus says that He must work on the Sabbath. Why? The reason He says He must work is that His **Father** is **also** working!

In other words, Jesus is claiming to **be** God and that He must work on the Sabbath because **as God** He upholds all creation. Please listen to how this truth is beautifully and wonderfully stated at the beginning of Hebrews, chapter 1: "Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom also He created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature, and He upholds the universe by the word of His power" (1:1-3).

Now, let's jump to the second half of our Gospel from John chapter 8. There Jesus tells the Jews who refuse to believe in Him that they are **not** children of God. Then Jesus goes on to say that all Old Testament believers - including the father of their people, **Abraham**—**believed** in Jesus and looked **forward** to His coming.

But when the unbelieving Jews hear that they became "triggered". They became riled up and, in so many words, say to Jesus, "*How could Abraham have known **You**? He lived and died hundreds of years before You were born!*" Undeterred by their outburst, Jesus proceeds to boldly speak these words to them: "Before Abraham was, **I am.**" By these awesome words Jesus leaves **no doubt**, that He's teaching that He is the eternal Son of God come in human flesh. Amazing!

There are many other passages I could share with you that clearly teach that Jesus deserves the title, "**Mighty God.**" But why am I stressing this point? Because our faith depends on it! You see, the devil doesn't want you and me to believe that Jesus is God in human flesh. Why is that?

Because if Jesus were only a man, then He is **not** our Savior. Scripture clearly teaches that only God can save us from sin, death, and the devil.

For example, in Genesis 3:15, God said that "the woman" would give birth to a male child who would crush the power of the devil. Only **God** can crush the power of the devil. Therefore, the male child born of "the woman" would have to be God Himself in human flesh.

And how **would** God's Son crush the devil? God's Son would crush the devil by allowing Himself to be crushed by our sin so that we might be saved from

the death and eternal hell we deserve. Of course, no ordinary human could pay for the sin of everyone. Only God could do that!

So, if God Himself was not hanging on that cross, then you and I are still under the curse of our sins; we're still slaves of the devil. No wonder the devil does not want you and I to believe that Jesus is "Mighty God."

Let's think this through: Everyone who denies that Jesus is God either has to deny the reality of sin or they have to try to deal with their sin themselves. But both options are based on a lie to keep us from receiving salvation from the "Mighty God"!

For example, sometimes we're tempted to deny that our sin is any big deal. Even we Christians are guilty of this. But if we really seriously believe that Jesus is God and that He is with us *always*, as He said, then we would not get so comfortable with our sin.

But sometimes we *do* get comfortable with our sin! Why is that? Maybe we think that Jesus was just a man who lived long ago and so He's no longer with us. Why should we worry about what a dead guy thinks about our sin? **But** the reality is that Jesus *lives* and He is with us—even when we are sinning against Him! For that very reason, we better take our sins seriously because Jesus *is* **Mighty God** and He sees all.

On the other hand, maybe we *do* take our sins seriously, but we foolishly think that we can deal with them *ourselves*. We think that we can make up for our sins by doing a few good deeds to impress God.

Yet, when we think like this, we don't realize that our sins deserve God's present and eternal punishment. We don't realize that only God **Himself** can save us from our sins and that He did this by sending His own Son to the cross for us.

So, when we try to deal with sin ourselves instead of repenting and trusting in Jesus, we're showing that we actually deny that Jesus is Mighty God who came to die on the cross for our sins.

But the Good News, **and the bottom line**, is that God has used His Word to rescue us from the devil's lies! Today God has taught us that the baby boy born of the virgin Mary is Mighty God, the One who hung on the cross for all your sins—including the sin of forgetting that Jesus is Mighty God in the flesh and that He is with you always, as He said. Jesus is Mighty God and He **forgives** you—and if the Mighty God forgives you, the devil has **no** claim on you.

Jesus *is* Mighty God. He loves you and He's claimed you as His own in Holy Baptism where He put His name on you and washed you from the guilt of your sin by the power of His divine blood.

Jesus is Mighty God, and He nurtures your faith in Him as He teaches you with His Word.

Jesus is Mighty God, and He gives you His own body and blood in Holy Communion to assure you that your sins are forgiven and that your Mighty God is with you!

Jesus is Mighty God, and He will help you to live as His child in this world.

Jesus is Mighty God, and He will give you eternal life in His love when He returns in power and glory. Amen!