

Worship 2 Witness: Wonderful Counselor

Isaiah 9:6

MPS: Jesus is God's Wonderful Counselor that fills with awe in worship and leads in faithful witness.

OBJ: Every person should worship Jesus as wonderful counselor and be a faithful witness because of 7 characteristics.

READ Isaiah 9:6

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty god, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

INTRO In this "Worship to Witness" series we are focusing on two principle aspects. First, WHO God is as set forth in the four names of the Messiah given in Isaiah 9:6. Second, HOW His work motivates us to bear a faithful witness in the world. We began with 3 primary motivations that move us through our worship to faithful witness, salvation, righteousness, and mission. **Our witness always reveals our worship because our worship fuels our witness.**

TRANS Today we worship Jesus as Wonderful Counselor to be a faithful witness of Him.

ILLUS Bad counsel can ruin your life.

In 2012 a man was convicted as guilty on multiple criminal charges and sentenced to 12.5 years in prison. He appealed the decision, arguing that he should receive a new trial on the basis that "he was defended by a man who was ineffective, incompetent and had no idea what he was doing". The irony is that the man was defending himself. His argument for seeking a new trial suggested that the court was to blame for his conviction by letting him represent himself at trial. The Judge reminded him that he had repeatedly advised Opiel to have legal counsel, and provided free advisory counsel. The Chief Public Defender shared his opinion by saying, "It's always a mistake. The old saying is that a man who represents himself has a fool as a client."¹

APPL What are you asking of God? What do you need or need to know from God?

We're always asking something 'of' or 'from' God. But the point I want to begin with to focus our hearts and minds is this, **"Are you asking to 'receive an answer' or are you asking to be 'filled with awe and worship'?"** It may seem trivial or trite to make this distinction, but your response reveals the motivation and desire of the heart.

Every answer from God is worthy of worship. But if you wait to worship until you've measured and judged His answer, worshiping God was not your interest as much as using God to get what you desire. Praise and thanksgiving are always a right path to God, and a right response to every answer received from God. No matter what God's counsel may be, He is always worthy to be worshiped first because He reveals his will, way and work which is perfect, good and pleasing. **When your request is not made from a heart of worship, any answer you receive will not produce worship in you. God's counsel always proves wonderful when by faith we request and receive His will, His work and His way.**

MPS: Jesus is God's Wonderful Counselor that fills with awe in worship and leads in faithful witness.

TRANS Consider the title "*Wonderful Counselor*".

Wonderful pertains to that which is impossible to understand, and holds an aspect of mysterious, extraordinary, and beyond comprehension. There is a miraculous nature to this word and it is distinguished by the wonder that it produces. *Wonderful* is used in a number of ways in the Scriptures to describe God, but mostly distinguishes His Name.

In Judges 13 an angel appears to Manoah to announce the birth of Samson. When Manoah asks his name, he responds, "*Why do you ask my name? It is beyond understanding.*" (Judg 13:18) The name of God is the center of His authority and power: for action, answered prayer, and salvation. (Ex 3:14; John 14:13; Acts 4:12; Rom 10:13)

"I am the Lord; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols." Isaiah 42:8

¹ "After representing himself, Duluth man complains of bad counsel", Detroit Lakes Online, Feb 29, 2012. Last accessed Wed, Nov 18, 2015.

God begins with his Name every time He reveals His power and glory. He wants His name to be known among all people. When God's name is known, his glory produces worship. *Jesus' name is wonderful; beyond all human faculty; worthy of all praise and glory in worship.*

Counselor means one who determines, plans, intends, purposes; to come to an informed, deliberate decision on a matter and take action. Jesus' counsel reveals God's will, way and work that is perfect, good and pleasing in every way. His counsel is the perfect determination of God's purpose, intention, satisfaction, provision and plan for life, and the power to live in it. Jesus as wonderful counselor means His counsel is beyond comprehension, but brings to fruition, or reality, God's eternal life within us. *God's counsel holds a wonderful-ness that addresses mind, heart and spirit in a way information cannot and does not.*

ILLUS The lyrics of the old hymn, In The Garden, exemplify how God's wonderful counsel works in us:

He speaks and the sound of his voice, is so sweet the birds hush their singing.

And the melody that He gave to me within my heart is ringing.

Refrain: And He walks with me and He talks with me, and he tells me 'I am His own'.

And the voice I hear and we tarry there none other has ever known.

Jesus' counsel fires in the mind and rings in the heart a glory that addresses all understanding with His greater wonder in awe-filled worship.

OBJ: 7 Characteristics distinguish God's counsel as wonderful to leads to awe-filled worship.

1. Wonderful counselor is eternal.

The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the plans of His heart to all generations. Psa 33.11

God's counsel has no 'shelf life', no 'best by' or expiration date. The warranty of His word never runs out. What He says is "always". It always works. It is always right. *Jesus is eternally relevant, effective and sufficient for all of life.*

Jesus' counsel is eternal in power.

For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength. 1 Cor 1.25
God's worst counsel is still greater than humanity's cumulative wisdom. God's counsel establishes and accomplishes His will and work. He cannot be thwarted.

Jesus' counsel is eternal in perspective.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. Isa 55.8-9

The eternal perspective of Jesus' counsel makes it incomparable. What God knows, what He does, what He thinks and how He works are nothing like us. In a meme with us standing next to God the caption should read, "One of these is not like the other". Some have dared to match God's wisdom with quips, proverbs, sayings and wisdom, but none have compared with the multitude nor the magnitude of God's counsel. *God is altogether higher in every way.*

Jesus' counsel is eternal in scope.

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and inscrutable His ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who been His counselor? Rom 11.33-34

God does not consult others for counsel, but speaks and brings everything into alignment with His Word. One of the reasons we may not understand God's answer when He gives it is because we do not see what He sees. But we are not commanded to understand His answer, only to obey by faith. *Jesus' counsel leads us in God's everlasting way.*^{Psalms 139:24}

ILLUS *Where do you go for counsel?*

Our need for counsel is unending. When we go to God for counsel, we're not consulting with one who has great experience and expertise, but one who is all-knowing. God's counsel grounds us in perfect understanding, experience and power for eternity. **And yet, how often is God the last one we go to in our time of need?** When seek the Lord, we are inquiring of his perfect, eternal counsel. We don't need an answer to a problem or question. We seek wisdom beyond the ages. **God's counsel fills with awe in worship because it pours eternity into our hearts.**

TRANS And as glorious as the eternal nature of God's counsel, when coupled with this next characteristic it multiplies glory unimaginably more.

2. Wonderful counselor is personal.

When we move to this second characteristic we need to stop and see the span we have covered. We've moved from eternity to a mist, the extent of our lives on earth. **Jesus is glorious as wonderful counselor because He is eternal and personal.**

Psalms 139 presents a glorious revelation of God's knowledge of our lives. God is intimately and ultimately knowledgeable about every detail of your life. The psalmist is moved to awe-filled worship at the extent of God's personal knowledge when he says, "*Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.*" (Psa 139:6) **The most wonderful counsel worthy of worship comes from an eternally wise God who holds a most intimate knowledge of your life.**

TRANS But Jesus counsel (knowledge) OF us is not the only personal characteristic.

Jesus' counsel TO us is as glorious as His comprehensive knowledge OF us.

I praise the Lord because he advises me. Even at night, I feel his leading.

I keep the Lord before me always. Because he is close by my side, I will not be hurt. Psa 16:7-8

When God answers our questions, concerns, requests, thoughts and prayers, he provides more than an intellectual knowledge. He addresses our whole being. Who better to counsel our being at once than the one who knows our whole being best! **Jesus meets our every personal need with His perfect wisdom.**

There is no moment or situation in which Jesus' counsel is not sufficient to lead our lives. He leads us in the way we should go and advises us. He guards us along the way as we follow Him. Jesus' counsel speaks to us where we are, in whatever we are dealing with, addresses our fears to give faith and leads us to a deeper understanding of and obedience in Jesus. **Jesus' counsel is personal that we might personally worship God and walk in the wonder of His truth.**

3. Wonderful counselor is spiritual.

God's wonderful counsel speaks to the deepest areas of our life.

Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul keeps them. Psa 119:129

Jesus' counsel is so wonderful that it resonates deep within our soul to empower obedience. The counsel of God's Word engages more than the mental faculties of the mind. **The wonderful counsel of God penetrates all the way to the spirit and soul of those who trust in Him.**

God works primarily below the surface to address all of life, to relate with the real you. God's Word penetrates to the heart, to speak to the center of life. (Acts 2:37), search out the mind and heart, (Rev 2:23) and disclose the purposes of the heart. (1 Cor 4:5) **God's counsel addresses the heart where sin roots ultimate condemnation and lies hidden, that He might bring true life in righteousness.**

God's counsel sources and guards our spiritual life.

Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life. Prov 4:23

I have stored your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Psalm 119:11

God sources His greater glory from a new heart that satisfies and leads in righteousness and godliness. God's Word supplies fuel for the heart to source our life. God's Word also shields the heart against sin's attacks and infections. Other

things may aid us, but nothing replaces God's counsel through His word in us. Only God's wonderful counsel is sufficient to help us when sin tempts us. [The light of God's counsel sources our strength and stands guard to dispel the deception of sin's temptation.](#)

God's counsel gives spiritual strength to keep us from sin's deception and condemnation.

For whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything. 1 John 3:20
God's counsel encourages us when our own heart condemns us. He protects us from ourselves when we are defeated or deceived by sin. [God's wonderful counsel works in the real you to guard you from you.](#)

TRANS These next three characteristics remind us that whatever God says to us is sufficient for us.

4. Wonderful counselor is provisional.

I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you. **Psa 32.8**

What God tells you is not just for you, but for your good. No, I haven't always liked things that were "for my good". But I have appreciated the good they brought and the evil or wrong they avoided. God cares more about you than you do. And, he's better at caring for you than you are. [God's wonderful counsel leads us in what is good even when we are confused about all that is good.](#)

God leads us in His will, and sometimes that is a different direction than we try to go. Two important words help us understand God's counsel, instruct and teach. Instruct is the basic idea of imparting knowledge. Sometimes God gives us what we need to know to do what we need to do. The second word is teach. This word moves beyond imparted knowledge to a gradual understanding in action and attitude. God's intent in his counsel includes far more than imparting knowledge. He wants to teach us His ways. When God teaches us, he instructs us to change our actions and attitudes with great care and compassion. [God works to makes us more like him in all his counsel.](#) When you trust the provision of God's wonderful counsel, you will focus more on His transforming work within rather than changes around you. [God's wonderful counsel is provisional, compassionately transforming life as we serve His will and way for greater glory.](#)

5. Wonderful counselor is prevailing.

*Listen to counsel and accept discipline, that you may be wise the rest of your days.
Many plans are in a man's heart, but the counsel of the Lord will stand.* **Pro 19.20-21** (NASB)

This characteristic is simple, but essential for us. When we seek God's counsel we must understand that it is prevailing. This should direct our attention to listen to and for God in all circumstances, instead of listening for what we want to hear from God until we find something we can turn into it. Demanding what we want to hear always destroys and produces pain and hurt. [Trusting God's counsel, regardless of where it comes from, means we trust Him to lead in His everlasting way, even when it seems more difficult in the moment.](#)

Understanding the prevailing nature of God's counsel positions us to receive counsel from God that moves our life into His will, not His will to our life. This characteristic reminds us that we serve God and His purposes. Our life submits to His counsel, regardless of where He leads. Our every petition unto God, in humble trust of His prevailing counsel, is "they will be done". Because God's wonderful counsel is prevailing, we approach God with a humble "yes" by faith, before we ever make our request known. [Christians worship God's counsel as prevailing when we stand ready to fully submit our lives to Him.](#)

ILLUS Marriage Counseling

I was counseling a couple one time who were having serious trouble. They were ministers and, because of their situation, did not feel free to openly share with those closest to them in ministry. They didn't want a divorce because they knew it was wrong. I listened to them explain their relationship problems, they both knew what the issues were in their marriage, and agreed with the issues. Also, they both acknowledged their own failures in the marriage and sin that prevented them from

taking steps toward reconciliation and working through their problems. One was hard with pride and the other hot in anger. As I listened and we talked in circles for a few minutes, I stopped the conversation and asked, "What will it take for you to be so deeply broken enough to be desperate for change in your marriage?" They both knew God's prevailing counsel, but neither of them was at a point of trusting it over their own pride and understanding. [When we worship God's wonderful counsel as prevailing, we humble ourselves to trust Him and walk in faith as He counsels, even when it opposes our position.](#)

6. Wonderful counselor is blessing.

*Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, but his delight is in the law of the Lord. **Psa 1.1** (NIV)*

The Scriptures comprise God's eternal, wise counsel. We are taught to pursue and follow it. We are warned against the dangers of life without it. God's blessing is illustrated throughout scripture. Yet we often do not live with an attentiveness to seeking God's blessing in life. When we walk in the Lord's counsel, given through His Word and imparted by Holy Spirit, we enjoy a comprehensive, all-inclusive favor bestowed on life. God's counsel is living truth for all of life. No other counsel can provide what God bestows on those who walk in His counsel. [Those who want to enjoy the blessing of God in life walk in His wonderful counsel.](#)

7. Wonderful counselor is a person.

Isaiah prophesied of a son given to BE God's wonderful counselor for us. Wonderful counselor means God's counsel is a person. Until the counsel of God's Word, the leading of His Spirit, the input of His people and the understanding you receive points you to a person, it has not yet reached the status of wonderful.

Jesus is God's wonderful counselor given to us. We bear a faithful witness when we build our lives on His counsel, surround our life with a community shaped by His counsel and share His eternal counsel with others. We know him as one who is eternally wise counsel. We are drawn closer to Jesus through a more intimate knowledge and interaction with Him by His wonderful counsel. We trust his counsel by living our lives in the will, way and work of His counsel. [Salvation means we submit our life to Jesus as the one who is Wonderful Counselor and trust in His all-sufficient wisdom for eternal life.](#)

CLOSE

[What do you need from the Wonderful Counselor today? What is He saying to you?](#)

[Will you worship God in humble surrender as you seek His counsel, trusting that He is always wonderful?](#)