

Jesus Christ: "Wonderful!"

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Our Scripture reading this morning is from Isaiah 9:1-7. Isaiah 9:1-7.

1 Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations. 2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. 3 Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. 4 For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian. 5 For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire. 6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

May God bless the reading of his sacred word.

Dear church family, we have all met people in our lives that we said to each other after we'd met them, "They're just wonderful, wonderful people." And it's often the case, though, isn't it, that the more you get to know some of those people you thought first were wonderful, the more you come to see that they, too, just like you and me, have feet of clay. We are not as wonderful as we might first appear to be, but there is one who is wonderful, absolutely, perfectly, spotlessly wonderful and it's he who was born in Bethlehem's manger and became human like us, without sin, to be the wonderful Redeemer for sinners. That's what we want to focus on this morning, this wonderful Savior, because the more you get to know him, the more and more and more wonderful he becomes to you. He must increase, we must decrease.

Our text this morning is Isaiah 9:6.

6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

With God's help I'm hoping to bring you five sermons, one on each of these names that Isaiah speaks of in relationship to Christ, glorious names. So we'll just look this morning only at the name "Wonderful," hence the title of my sermon, "Jesus Christ: 'Wonderful!'" We want to look at three thoughts: what does wonderful mean, why do we need him as wonderful, and how is he wonderful?

Well, 700 years before Jesus was born, Isaiah saw him coming, saw him coming so clearly, so very clearly that Augustine said, "Methinks Isaiah is the fifth gospel, for it is as if he stands beneath the cross." Isaiah, whose name means "Jehovah salvation," is the sole author of the book of Isaiah and his ministry dates during the administrations of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, a long ministry beginning about 740 BC.

The theme of Isaiah is that judgment for sin and salvation by grace is resting in the Messiah, the coming Messiah, for the glory of God, and the purpose that Isaiah has in this book is to, then, warn us of impending judgment and to comfort those who seek the Lord, that he will not repudiate his covenant but he will come, and the Messiah will be born, and Jesus will reign supreme. And so Isaiah is a book that is filled with warnings on the one hand for the ungodly and the impenitent, and filled with comfort on the other for the godly and those who seek and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now Isaiah makes clear both who the Messiah will be and what he will do, and some of his verses are just, well, Spurgeon would call them the great text of the Bible where he just unfurls who Christ is in a marvelous way, and certainly our text this morning is one of those. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful." What a text this is.

Now the word "wonderful" here is a special word. There's actually two ways to take this up. Probably the more common way today is to bring the first two names here together. The King James version has a comma between "Wonderful" and "Counsellor," seeing them as separate names, but it could also just as legitimately be taken up as one name, then it would be parallel with the other names that have more than one word to them, "Wonderful Counsellor." And he is that, of course, and we will actually see that, God willing, in our next sermon in this series. But there also have been those who have said, "Well, he's called Wonderful other places in the Bible and he is a God of wonders and therefore since it can legitimately be taken up as the King James did, that his name is also Wonderful. Either way, this is certainly true of him." And so it is perfectly legitimate to have a full sermon just dedicated to how wonderful Jesus is, not just as a counselor but in his entire being. So the one who is born in a stable in Bethlehem is the one whom Isaiah calls Wonderful, because he is incomprehensible. He dwells in light inaccessible, hidden from our eyes in all his glory, but absolutely wonderful.

Now the word "wonderful" used here, in Hebrew "pele," literally could be translated as "wonder," wonder or as "wonderful," and usually when the Bible uses this word, it's referring to God in his historic saving actions, his acts that he performs on behalf of his people, the people of Israel. The root of this word which is just the "p" and the "l," refers to things that are unusual, things beyond human capabilities, things that awaken in us a sense of astonishment, a sense of wonder. Something that is pele, something that is wonderful is not just a remarkable happening but it's a miraculous happening, if you will, that moves us because it shows us God's amazing loving care, a divine intervention, and his chesed, his lovingkindness, his covenant loyalty to his own people. Someone has described this word "wonder" as "God's marvels of love." God's marvels of love, and it makes you think of the Psalms, doesn't it, where Psalm after Psalm is telling you about the wonderful works of God to his people.

But here in this case, you see, God is setting before us through Isaiah the most wonderful wonder, if you will, of all time, the greatest miracle of all miracles, because this wonder doesn't just refer to an action of God but a person of God, the second person of the holy Trinity becomes man, "unto us a child is born. Immanuel. God with us. Unto us a son is given. His name shall be called Wonderful." He is God's chesed, God's lovingkindness personified. He is his names. He is Wonder with a capital "W." Jesus is eternal Wonder, divine Wonder, glorious Wonder. There's no wonder like this.

Unto us a son is born and a child is given and he's the Son of God. He became Son of Man. Samuel Rutherford said, "My salvation is my Lord's second greatest miracle." Then he went on to say, "His first greatest miracle is the Incarnation in Bethlehem." Well, something of this, you see, that Isaiah is setting before us this morning. Who's ever been like Jesus? There's no one like him. His character is distinguished, unique, miraculous, separate from sin, separate from others. Who has ever established a kingdom that is not of this world without arms and without fame and without wealth? As Lord of lords and King of kings, he builds a kingdom that has never perished from a handful of fishermen and other unknown men whom he calls to be his apostles.

What a wonder Jesus is. He's one-of-a-kind. He's in a class by himself. Someone has put it this way. He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village where he worked in a carpenter's shop until he was 30. For three years he was an itinerant preacher. He never traveled 200 miles from the place where he was born. He did none of the things that we often associate with greatness. He had no credentials but himself. He was only 33 when the tide of public opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. One of them denied him. He was turned over to his enemies, went through a mockery of a trial, nailed to a cross between two thieves. And while he was dying, his executioners gambled for his garments, his only property he had on earth. And when he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend. And now 20 centuries have come and gone, today he's a central figure of the human race. All the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that have ever sat, all the kings that have ever reigned, all put together have not impacted the life of the human race, man on this earth, as much as this one solitary life. His name is

Wonderful. He's Jesus. He's full of Wonder, wonder-full. "To whom will you liken me," he says. He's not comparative, he's superlative.

From eternity past to eternity future, he is all wonder. Wonder. From the moment of his birth until he ascends into heaven, his life on earth produced marvel, wonder wherever he went. People said, "Who is this who speaks with authority not like the scribes and the Pharisees?" But now this wonderful Savior, you see, is someone that we must know, someone that we must enter into relationship with. That's the point. That's the point of Paul all throughout his epistles. Just take one place, Philippians 3, he says verses 7 and 8, "what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung," that is, garbage, "that I may win Christ." You see, he's the most wonderful being that ever lived, but you and I, and this is the wonder of the Wonder, may know him, may have a relationship with him; that's what you call becoming a Christian. It's not just about going to church or being religious, becoming a Christian is entering into a relationship with the most wonderful person in the universe, the Lord Jesus Christ.

You know, sometimes people will want to impress you that they know someone very famous, but really the only thing that's important in life, dear friends, if you know the most famous person of all, Jesus Christ. And Paul says that for him when he looks back to the road to Damascus 30 years earlier than when he wrote to the Philippians, the only thing that mattered to him was that he counted everything in Christ gain to him, but everything outside of Christ he counted loss for Christ. He says, "I saw him. I saw him in his glory, in his majesty." Everything diminished, everything faded into the background, everything took its proper place in comparison to this wonder when he entered into relationship with Jesus Christ.

But the beauty of Philippians 3:7-8 is that verse 7 when he's talking about his past, he uses the past tense in the verbs, speaking about how it was when he first saw Christ, first fell in love with Christ, how wonderful it was for him. But in verse 8, he switches to present tense, 30 years later saying, "I still find him wonderful 30 years later. I'm still enamored with him. I'm still learning so much more about him. His name is still Wonderful. He's still the most worthy person for us in the universe. I never tired of him. I love him more and more. The love of Christ," he says, "constrains me." So this is the beauty of Jesus. This is really what his name means. He is Wonderful personally, experientially in the soul of his people.

So my question to you at the end of this first point this morning is: is he Wonderful to you? Is he all your hope? All your trust? All your future? Can you say, "I cannot do without him. I absolutely need Jesus." And that leads us to our second point: why, why do we need him as Wonderful? Well, I suppose there are lots of reasons and we could easily have a few sermons on all the reasons why we need Jesus, but let me just mention two of them to you, two major ones. One is this: to give meaning and purpose and a sense of wonder to your life. To give meaning and purpose and a sense of wonder to your life. You see, we need Jesus because, well, apart from him our life really isn't wonderful, is it?

When we're unsaved, let's be honest now, when we're unsaved, our life is not wonderful. In fact, life is a bit drab for people. It leaves a void when we don't have Jesus. There's a vacuum inside. One of the terrible effects of the fall is this, that human beings lose their sense of wonder. You see, the chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever, and in the fall we've lost that, and if we're not born again, if we're not brought into a relationship with Jesus Christ through saving faith and repentance, to find in him the wonder, the joy, the beauty, the purpose, the meaning of life, if we don't find that, you see, we lose a sense of wonder, especially as we grow older.

So many people today are bored with life, and maybe you are somewhat bored as well. Maybe you're disillusioned with life. Maybe you're rather unhappy with your own life, you're disappointed with people, disappointed with the fact that you're no longer excited about life, the fizz is out of your Coke of life and you're, well, maybe you're part of that group of people that Bertram Russell claimed that at least half of the sins of mankind were caused by the fear of boredom. You know, many criminals when you ask them, "Why did you do that?" They say, "Well, I was bored. I didn't know what to do. I did it for kicks." You see, we've lost our wonder.

Now if you look at a little baby, look at a little grandchild or child, a child has a sense of wonder. That's why we laugh at the things they say. They're so beautiful, they're so exciting. Have you ever seen a little child just kind of flailing around with his arms and all of a sudden he stops and he just stares at his own hand, just looks at his own hand like he's never seen it before? He's amazed at his own hand. There's a sense of wonder. But as we grow older, you see, the hardening process of sin if we're not in Jesus, life becomes more empty, the excitement of life oozes away and we begin to feel more empty and more bored and we don't know what the future will be, we fear death, we fear judgment, we fear disease, we might fear COVID, whatever it may be. You see, does this describe your life? Do you feel a sense of emptiness inside? When you don't have Jesus and you know you need him? You need something that is superlatively wonderful, something that is much better and bigger than you are, and that is Jesus.

It's amazing. It's absolutely amazing how Satan tries to turn that around in your life and actually tell you that knowing Jesus is kind of confining and boring and will narrow your life. Of course, knowing Jesus will make you deny yourself and take up the cross and follow him, but knowing Jesus, he's the Lord of the universe. Your life is just the opposite. Your life is very small and confined without him, but when you know him your life is expanded and there's purpose and meaning and joy and value. As Spurgeon said, "The believer has joy in this life that no unbeliever could ever pretend to approach and he's got the best joys yet to come in life eternal." So he's got the best of both worlds. You see, life in Jesus is wonderful and life outside of him is empty and boring.

You know, this is illustrated wonderfully in the story of Manoah and his wife in Judges 13. When Manoah dialogues with the angel of the covenant, he says, "What is thy name that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honour? And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?" But in Hebrew the same word is used, "pele," seeing it is wonderful. "So Manoah took a kid with a meat

offering, and offered it upon a rock unto the LORD: and the angel did wondrously," or you could translate it wonderfully. You see, his name is Wonderful and he did wonderfully. "And Manoah and his wife looked on. For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground." That's what we call a theophany, an appearance of God in the form of an angel, an appearance of Christ, the second person of the Trinity. A Christophany, actually. And so when Manoah and his wife come into the presence of Jesus Christ in the form of an angel, you see, every void is filled and they're filled with wonder. They say, "The angel did wondrously. It was wonderful."

But it also means that they bow in adoration and, you see, when you get to know God, you'll understand what this means. No, it doesn't have to be some fantastic experience like this, but you will experience something. You will experience how wonderful this Savior is and you will bow with your entire life in adoration before him, and you will say, "His name is Wonderful and he does wondrously in my life." And it will give you purpose and meaning and joy and fulfillment like nothing else can.

So that's one reason why we need Jesus. We don't just need Jesus to forgive us our sins. The Holy Spirit often works a need for Jesus in the soul by showing us the emptiness of our lives apart from him. But secondly, we need Jesus, of course, and this is what you would expect me to say, to be saved from all our sins and to have fellowship and relationship with him. And of course, that's true. We need Jesus to do two things for us that we can never do for ourselves. I've said this very often to you. I'm going to keep saying it often as long as I am your pastor, one of your pastors. The first is: we need his active obedience to obey the law perfectly. We cannot obey the law perfectly so we cannot have a right to eternal life. It's only through his active obedience and grace by faith that we can have eternal life through his perfect obedience. He perfectly loved God above all, perfectly loved his neighbors himself all 33 years of his life, never sinned. Active obedience. And secondly, we need him in his passive obedience, that is, his suffering obedience when he suffered and died and endured the essence of hell so that all of our sins could be wiped away, washed away, in the blood of the Lamb. As Calvin put it, by this double obedience he did everything for us that we need to have done for us so that when we, by the grace of the Spirit, may believe in him alone for salvation, we may be genuinely saved and our sins washed away. So he's the great substitute who takes our place. He tasted the essence of hell that we would never have to go to hell when we believe in him alone for salvation.

So dear children of God, he became like us that we might become like him. He was rejected that we might be accepted. He was condemned that we might be forgiven. He was punished that we might be pardoned. He suffered that we might be saved. He was whipped that we might be healed. He was hated that we might be loved. He was crucified that we might be justified. He was tortured that we might be comforted. He died that we might live. He experienced the essence of hell that we might go to heaven. He endured what we deserve that we might enjoy only what only he deserves.

He's Wonderful. We come with our need to Jesus, our need to have our void filled, our need to have our sins forgiven, our need to have relationship with him. We come to him with a sense of wonder. He's the one who brings excitement into our lives. He brings the oh, the vocative into our lives, "Oh, how wonderful he is!" He's the miracle. He's the purpose. He's our salvation. He's Jehovah's salvation.

He's wonderful in all kinds of ways and we'll look at those ways specifically. Jesus is wonderful in so many ways. I'm just going to mention several of them, we'll look at a few in a bit more depth and just mention some others.

He's, first of all, wonderful in his Incarnation. "Unto us a child is born, a son is given, and his name shall be called Wonderful." You see, what Isaiah is saying here, his name shall be called Wonderful because the Jews to this day will not take his name upon their lips, many of them, because they have such an awe and reverence for it, and yet they don't understand, many of them at least, why that name must be on our lips but with awe and with reverence. To really embrace that he, the Lord of glory, became a baby in a manger, that the God of all creation became a baby, unable to do more in his human nature than to lie and stare and make noises that babies make. He needed to be fed and taught to talk like any other child. Spurgeon talks about infinity becoming an infant, eternity walking around as a little child tumbling and falling about among the shavings of a carpenter's shop. What a wonder, the Son of God became man.

There's a story told about a Swiss naturalist named Huber, and as a child he stood and watched with his mother a colony of ants moving about, and as he looked down at this anthill and saw all the tiny little ants scurrying about to and fro, he said to his mother, "I think they're afraid of me." His mother said, "Well, yes, they are but you wouldn't hurt them, would you? You're fond of them, aren't you?" And Huber said back to his mother, "Yes, but how can I tell them that? How can I let them know that I wouldn't harm them, that I just love them? Unless I become an ant, mommy, they will never know how I feel about that."

Well, it's difficult, isn't it, difficult for us to visualize a little boy or a grown human being become an ant, but you know, that's really nothing compared to what happened. I suppose there's some relationship between a human being and an ant metaphysically but the gospel tells us that he who is altogether different from us, he whose name is Wonderful, the incomprehensible God has actually become a lowly man. He became a little pinprick in the womb of the virgin Mary. Think of it, the heaven of heavens cannot contain him and he enters into our humanity through the womb of the virgin Mary miraculously, without male seed connecting with female seed so that no pollution is passed on, and he can be utterly sinless. This is the miracle of miracles. He is wonderful, full of wonder, and becomes a child through supernatural conception, and yet through ordinary processes of birth.

This is Christmas, the incomprehensible, the Prince of Glory, a babe in a manger, the infinite one, bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, Son of God becoming Son of man, Creator who created the world, made out of the creature. He who has made the world, is

above the world, came into the world, the Almighty, a little child. The immortal Son putting on rags of mortality. The eternal one, a child of time. God who made man after his image was himself made in man's image. He who was dwelling in the heavens was let down into the hell of this earth. He who thunders in the heavens cried in the manger. The invisible God made visible. God who took our flesh and dwelt in it with his divine fullness so that flesh could become more glorious than angels, it's true that flesh opened up his gospel treasures of sovereign grace by being our Savior, our Redeemer, our kinsman, our Lord, our elder brother, our reconciler, our shepherd.

His name is Wonderful. He's wonderful in his Incarnation, and he's wonderful, secondly, in his holiness. His holiness. God became man not just to tell us how much he loves sinners like us. That's where the illustration with the ants breaks down and where all illustrations break down, of course. Huber wanted to become an ant because he was so aware that those ants are afraid of him, he wanted to tell them that there's nothing for them to be afraid of. But this morning, I need to tell you that if you're not a Christian by the grace of God, you have everything to be afraid of. It's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God unprepared.

We've had four deaths in the last 2 ½ weeks. Whose turn is next? It is appointed unto all men to die. You too. You can die young. You can die middle-aged. You must die when you're old. I tell you this morning, there is a Jesus who's wonderful. He can save the greatest of sinners. He glows in light inaccessible, hidden from our eyes. Throughout his lifetime of ministry, the angels even covered their faces when they looked upon him. He is holy, holy, holy and you are a sinner, aren't you? And you've broken his law, haven't you? And you've done it thousands and ten thousands of times, haven't you? In fact, every second of the clock tick that you're not loving God above all and loving your neighbor as yourself, you're sinning and you're going to appear before God. You need a Savior because he is holy.

You see, Jesus didn't come into this world just to tell us we have nothing to fear. That's the kind of message we hear in shallow liberal churches that bring a truncated gospel. The gospel talks about the anger of God. The gospel says that when we refuse to bend the knee before King Jesus, we are rejecting God's only way of salvation, and that if we continue to do that and we die that way, we will be brought under the displeasure of God forever. But it also tells us the wonderful news that there is a way of escape, that this holy God, this wonderful God, this majestic and glorious God has actually entered into our human world, has become a human being not just to tell us how much he loves sinners but to prove it by going to a cross, by taking the sins of sinners upon himself, by bearing that punishment, that hell that sinners deserve.

And you, you must receive that message. You must bend the knee before that message, that God loves sinners so much that he's come to die for them. But you can't go to heaven by just acknowledging that this is true. You have to enter into that relationship. You have to know that he did this for you and that your heart has been changed by him to love him for his amazing gospel gift of himself. Let me put it this way. If I were to say to you that I jumped into Lake Michigan yesterday afternoon in cold water to show you my love for

you. You'd say, "What are you talking about?" Something's wrong with me. But now if I said to you I jumped into Lake Michigan yesterday afternoon to show my love for you, to save you because you were drowning in Lake Michigan yesterday afternoon. Then you would understand why I did it and you would be how grateful to me? You'd be outstandingly grateful.

But you see, the problem today even with church people, even with some of us sitting here today, is you're not drowning in your sin, you don't see the need, and so you hear about the cross and you go, "Oh, it sounds nice," but you don't understand it, you don't understand the wonder of it, the wonder of it, that he gave his life for sinners, that he died for sinners exactly like you. And so you're in danger of falling into the hands of a living God, a holy God unprepared. You need to be rescued. You need to be saved. You need to be put right with God and Jesus has come into the world to do that for sinners. Repent in his holy presence and believe in him alone for salvation.

And then thirdly, Jesus is wonderful because he brings us to this confession and to this submission. Let's go back just a moment to Genesis 32. You remember the story, how Jacob asked God what is his name, and there's a prior question in the chapter where God asks Jacob, "What is your name?" And then in verse 24 and 27 we read, "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said," remember, boys and girls? "Jacob." Now we just read over that, we don't think much of it but this is amazing. There's a spiritual lesson here, you see. Do you want to know God's name? Do you want to come to know this God whose name is Wonderful? When then, first of all, you must tell him your name if you want to know his name. And you see, Jacob's name means "twister; deceiver." His name was shameful and that's who Jacob really was in himself, he was a schemer, a twister, a deceiver. He liked to manipulate people. This is who he was. But 20 years before he wrestled with this angel, he was in his dad's bedroom and his dad couldn't see very well and you remember, boys and girls, his dad asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Esau." He wouldn't be Jacob before his dad. He wanted the blessing but he also didn't want to be who he really was, didn't want to face himself, even denied his name was Jacob when his dad asked him.

You see, what has to happen in our lives is we have to become Jacob, we have to become honest before God. I'm just a sinner, a twister, a deceiver, a manipulator, I would even manipulate thee, O Lord, if I could. And of course, you can't. If you want a real relationship with God, you've got to own your own transgressions, you've got to become who you are, you've got to come in confession and submission. What is your name today? Who are you? If you're honest you might have to say, "Well, I'm a fighter or I'm a rebel or I'm a pretender or I'm a liar." If God had to choose your name and say what you really are in one word, what would God say about you? Would he just say sinner? Well, that's the name you need to bring back to him and say, "Lord, I'm just sinner. God be merciful to me, sinner," the publican said. Admit your name. Admit your name to the Lord right now and ask him to change you and forgive you, to give you a new name like Jacob received a new name, Israel, that he would have power and prevail with God.

You see, to become a Christian you have to lose that good opinion you have of yourself. You have to become a sinner. You have to see how God sees you, the holy God, and then see yourself as he sees you, and that will make you cry out for mercy, that will make you say, "Give me Jesus else I die!" You're like a little ant in the presence of the holy God and he's asking you this morning, "Puny little man, little woman, little teenager, little boy or girl that you are and that I am, who are you? Who are you?" And can you say this morning, "I'm Jacob. I'm twister. I'm schemer. I'm a sinner. I need thee, Lord. I need the born Christ King of Bethlehem. I need him whose name is Wonderful."

He's available for sinners but if you refuse to become a sinner, if you refuse to become who you are before God, you're never going to be saved. You see, salvation means becoming honest before God with who you are. It means saying your name in the presence of God. It means confession of sin. But it also means turning the government of our lives over to him and putting it on his shoulders. You see, the problem today, the problem today is we want to live independently from God and yet we want heaven in the end. That was the problem of paradise. One old minister said over the gate written as Adam exited paradise was the word "Independency." Independency, he tried to live without God and you will fall and destroy yourself. You try to live without God, you will go to hell forever.

Become who you are, bend your knee before the Son of God. Come. Open your mouths wide and he will fill it. Come to the Savior who's Wonderful, who will feed you with the finest of wheat and with honey out of the rock, who will satiate your soul and fill you with wonder. Come to him in his wonderful offices as prophet to teach you, as priest to sacrifice for you, as king to rule over you. Come to him in his wonderful names, not just Wonderful, but also Counsellor and Mighty God and Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace. Come to him to receive his wonderful words, words of gospel, words of grace, words of truth. Come to him in his wonderful actions. He can act to save you, powerfully save you so that you lose your life and find your life in him. Come to him in his wonderful love, his sovereign love, his condescending love, his sacrificial love, his desiring love, his undeserved love, his patient love, his strong love, his persevering love, his infinite love, his unchangeable love, his eternal love. Come to him as a Savior who suffered and died and then is resurrected and exalted and sits at the right hand of the Father so that you too can say, "For me to live is Christ and to die would be gain, because I would then be with him forever."

He's worth it, friends. He's worth your whole life. If you had a thousand lives to live, he'd be worthy every one of them because his name is Wonderful. So go to him and bow and confess and believe and receive and embrace Wonderful. Amen.

Great God of heaven, we thank thee so much that thou art a God full of wonder and that when we may see thee with the eye of faith, we are filled with awe and like Manoah and his wife, we fall on our faces in worship, or like John in Revelation, or like Isaiah in the throne room, or like Job in the last chapter of his book. O God, help us to say, "I've heard of thee by the hearing of the ear but now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I repent and abhor myself in dust and ashes before God. I am Jacob." And, oh, then that we

would hear thee say that, "Thou art no more Jacob. Thou art Israel and that it is power with God that has prevailed." O Lord, what an amazing thing, a wonderful thing the gospel is. Help us to love thee because thou hast first loved us. Help us to worship thee in awe, in wonder, in joy, to worship thee Incarnate, to worship thee suffering, to worship thee resurrected and exalted, to worship thee coming again on the clouds. O Lord, please please do not let us go our own way. Stop us. Give us a new birth and work in us these things we heard about this morning for thy own glory and for our own souls' eternal salvation. Bless each one gathered here and bless visitors among us as well. And Lord, I lift up George V. in a particular way, two months shy of 100 years of age. Oh, please be with him in the loss of his dear wife of 70 years of marriage, and let him say together with us, "His name is Wonderful." In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.