

Mighty God
Isaiah 9:6
December 5, 2012
Advent Mid-week 2

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.

Grace, mercy, and peace from the Mighty God, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Last week we discussed the idea that, to the Jewish people of Jesus' day, a person's name was directly related to the character and essence of that person. Last week we saw that Jesus is our Wonderful Counselor because he is our king, who came with a miraculous plan for our present lives and a guaranteed hope for our eternal future.

Tonight, we want to examine the meaning of the second name in our text. Isaiah calls Jesus the Mighty God. We're going to look at this name with two questions in mind:

- 1) How do we know Jesus is God?
- 2) Why did Isaiah qualify the name God with the word mighty?

How do we know that Jesus is God? That is the question at hand. But, before we look at that question, let me ask you another question. How do you know I'm a pastor? Why do you call me, pastor? What gives you the assurance that I am who you think I am?

Whether you've ever thought about it or not, there are three things that let you know I'm a pastor. I'll show you how those three things work and then we'll use those same three things to determine that Jesus is God.

The first way you know I'm a pastor is that other people have told you. When I came to Prince of Peace, the Michigan District told you I was a pastor by approving my call to come here. Some of you even attended my installation as the pastor of Prince of Peace.

The second way you know I'm a pastor is by evidence. I'm here every Sunday morning. I teach Bible classes and confirmation class. I conduct the worship services. I write and deliver sermons. You hear what I say and can compare it to God's Word to prove that I have been trained to be Prince of Peace's resident theologian.

The third way you know I'm a pastor is that I claim to be a pastor. I make that claim with certainty. I know who I am and what I am. So by my own testimony, you know that I'm a pastor.

Now, let's apply these same three things to Jesus to see if Jesus is God. First, we have the testimony of others as to Jesus' identity. The Gospel of John opens with these words: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God* (Jn 1:1

NIV).

One of the ways to translate “Word” in the Greek is messenger. Jesus was God’s divine messenger. He carried the message of God’s love, holiness, and justice to the human race. Since Jesus was this messenger of God, John identifies Jesus as the Word. John also says that this Word was God. John is saying that Jesus is God.

In the angel’s announcement to Mary, that she was going to have a baby, we hear these words: *“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God”* (Lk 1:35 NIV). To be the Son of God means Jesus would be the same as God. As humans can only give birth to humans, God can only beget God.

Lastly, after his resurrection, when Jesus appeared to Thomas, Thomas said: *“My Lord and my God!”* (Jn 20:28 NIV). Remember, Thomas was a Jew. It would be inconceivable that he would call someone Lord and God unless he felt he was actually addressing God. Anything other than that would have made Thomas guilty of blasphemy.

So we have the testimony of others to tell us Jesus is God. The apostle John said so, the angel said so, and Thomas said it in such a way as to leave no doubt what he meant. The Bible is full of testimonies of Jesus’ divinity.

The second way we know Jesus is God is by empirical evidence. During his life on earth, Jesus fulfilled one Old Testament prophesy after another. Some these prophecies were made over a thousand years before his birth. The odds of one man fulfilling just eight of these prophecies are 1 in 10 to the 17th power. That’s 100,000,000,000,000,000. The odds of someone fulfilling all the prophecies in the Old Testament about the coming Messiah are 1 in 10 to the 97th power. That’s a 1 with 97 zeros after it. Those are the odds and Jesus did it.

The third way we know Jesus is God is that he knows who he is. Last Wednesday we talked about God announcing his name to Moses. In doing so, he told Moses his proper name is I AM, Yahweh . In the Gospel of John we find seven times when Jesus specifically told the people that he was I AM. In John 8:58, for example, we hear Jesus tell the people: *“I tell you the truth, before Abraham was born, I am!”* (Jn 8:58 NIV).

Listen to this discourse between Jesus and the Jews, taken from the 10th chapter of John. *“I and the Father are one.”* Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus said to them, *“I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?”* *“We are not stoning you for any of these,”* replied the Jews, *“but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God”* (Jn 10:30-33 NIV). Jesus announced his true identity and the Jews understood exactly what he was saying.

So, based on the testimony of others, the empirical evidence, and on his own belief in whom he is, we can conclude that Jesus is God. I once heard a trial lawyer say he wouldn’t have any reservations about representing Jesus in a court of law. Jesus claimed to be God, others said he is God, and all the evidence points to him being God.

But Isaiah didn't just call Jesus God, he called Jesus the Mighty God. The Hebrew word for "mighty" has three distinct definitions. This word means hero, warrior, and champion. All three of these pertain to Jesus when we think of him as our God.

Jesus is our hero. Heroes are people of noble character. Heroes perform acts of exceptional service for others and they show valor in times of adversity. Heroes are people other people pattern their lives after.

Human heroes, valiant as they may be, all have feet of clay. They all have some flaw that keeps them from being the perfect hero. However, Isaiah says the coming Messiah will be the perfect hero. Jesus is the perfect hero. Everyone can look up to him and model their lives after him. Jesus is a Hero-God – a Mighty God. Jesus is the hero that will never disappoint us.

The word mighty also means warrior. Jesus is our Warrior-God. When he was here on earth, Jesus fought battles that we could never win. Jesus fought a battle in the wilderness. After fasting for 40 days, Jesus was attacked by the devil. Satan did his best to destroy Jesus' sinless nature, but he didn't succeed. Jesus fought the battle of temptation and he won that battle for us.

Jesus also fought a battle for Grace. He battled self-righteousness and pride. When the woman caught in adultery was brought to him, the Jewish leaders wanted her stoned to death. But Jesus confronted their self-righteousness with the simple invitation for anyone who was sinless to cast the first stone. Jesus came to defend the repentant sinners – sinners like you and me.

Then, one dark Thursday night, Jesus fought a battle in Gethsemane. It was an incredible battle in which our Warrior-God fought the battle between his human will and the will of his Father. Seeing the cross in his future, while his humanness was recoiling from the thought, our Warrior-God prayed: *"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done"* (Lk 22:42 NIV).

Our Warrior-God fought in the desert, in the marketplace, and in Gethsemane. He fought every enemy, in every place, to carry out the miraculous plan for our salvation.

Jesus is also Mighty God because he is our champion. In the story of David and Goliath, Goliath is called the champion of the Philistines because he was the one who would fight in place of the Philistines. The idea was for David to fight Goliath in a "winner take all" battle to keep the two armies from having to fight.

A champion is someone who fights on behalf of another. Jesus is most certainly our Champion-God. Jesus fought the battles for us that we could never win for ourselves. Jesus fought sin, death, and the power of the devil on our behalf. Every step he took from Bethlehem to Calvary was a battle he waged for us.

What more can we ask for? We have a Hero-God who will never let us down. Someone

we can look up to and pattern our lives after. We have a Warrior-God who placed such value on us that he spent his life fighting our battles. We have a Champion-God who took the consequences of our sins upon himself.

By using the name Mighty God, Isaiah is telling us that a most remarkable miracle has taken place. The God of the universe, the Creator, our Judge, has now become our Hero, our Warrior, our Champion.