

Everlasting Father

Isa 9:6

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Background

This third Sunday of Advent is Gaudete Sunday, meaning Rejoice! Yet Advent is a season of waiting in anticipation and hope. How do we rejoice while waiting? We consider the third name given to the child that is born, the son that is given: Everlasting Father.

Sermon Text: Isa 9:1-7 (ESV)

¹ But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

- ² The people who walked in darkness
 have seen a great light;
 those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
 on them has light shone.
- ³ You have multiplied the nation;
 you have increased its joy;
 they rejoice before you
 as with joy at the harvest,
 as they are glad when they divide the spoil.
- ⁴ For the yoke of his burden,
 and the staff for his shoulder,
 the rod of his oppressor,
 you have broken as on the day of Midian.
- ⁵ For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult
 and every garment rolled in blood
 will be burned as fuel for the fire.
- ⁶ **For to us a child is born,
 to us a son is given;
 and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
 and his name shall be called
 Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
 Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**
- ⁷ Of the increase of his government and of peace
 there will be no end,

on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- a. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- b. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?
- c. What stands out to you the most from this sermon?

2. Sunday questions

- a. This week's theme was joy. Of the four themes (hope, love, joy and peace), which theme is speaking to you the most this Advent season? Why?
- b. In the midst of scary, tense and unsettled times, Isaiah urged King Ahaz to "keep calm and carry on – in faith" (Isa 7:4-9). Essentially, the encouragement was to not fear and to stand firm (ie. trust) in the Lord. Do these words provide encouragement to you today in the midst of these unsettled times? Why or why not?
- c. Advent is a time of "waiting and hoping" (Isa 8:17-18). Examples in the NT include Simeon, Anna and Joseph of Arimathea. Are you able to wait and hope this Advent season? Why or why not?
- d. I know "father" imagery is a sensitive/painful topic for some people. Is "everlasting Father" a comforting image for you or not? If you are able, can you share why?
 - If Jesus came to show us the Father (John 14:9), does that help you in this area?
- e. We sometimes say that "God is good all the time." How does that statement hit you? Can you say it with confidence this Advent season or does it ring hollow for you right now? If it rings hollow, write down your prayer?

**** NOTE: There will be no questions after 12/25 and 1/1. ****