

Down to Earth - Wonderful Counselor

In the middle of the “most wonderful time of the year,” many of you are facing a dilemma or difficulty.

- You may have a strained relationship with one or multiple family members.
- Perhaps you’re lonely or grieving a loss and the holidays are particularly painful for you.
- Or, this is the busiest time of the year and you dread the rat race that often accompanies this season.

Since my mother passed in 2000, I have enjoyed 18 holidays to a greater or lesser extent. For me, the reality is that the holidays are by their very nature bittersweet.

Although I would love to focus solely on the JOY of the moment – the sweetness of the holidays – the memories of holidays past bubble up. I miss those I loved who are no longer here to share the JOY of the moment.

But - I can’t imagine NOT remembering my family members and dear friends who are not here to celebrate the holidays this year. My memories are not only a source of sadness but also happiness, gratitude, love, humor, inspiration, and JOY! What a blessing – something I hold near and dear to my heart.

Christmas is such a great time of year, but it’s also an emotionally sad time for a lot of people. And that’s why we all need a “Wonderful Counselor”. The Christmas story is for every individual – not the masses!

Isaiah was a prophet to Judah 700 years before the birth of Christ. Judah was Facing trouble from neighbors (including their brothers from Israel) and from large countries in the region. Full of anxiety - they Had stopped listening to God and they were looking for a solution. All options they considered were what they could accomplish.

Isaiah 9:6-7 - *For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called*

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. NKJV

In the middle of the mess...the promise of Jesus. He's the hope!

Wonderful Counselor - Miraculous Counselor - It's beyond the imagination of what Christ will bring!

WHAT MAKES HIM A WONDERFUL COUNSELOR?

1. He UNDERSTANDS Your Struggles

Hebrews 4:15 - *For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. NKJV*

Jesus gets it. He understands it. He can relate to you.

Have you ever been betrayed? He has.

Have you ever been wrongly accused? He has.

Have people ever gossiped about you? He has.

Have you ever suffered physical pain? He has.

Have you ever been in physical need? He has.

Have you ever felt lonely? He has.

Have you ever suffered loss? He has.

Have you ever been afraid? He has.

Have you ever felt that you have reached the bottom and there is no way up? He has.

He understands. He knows how rough life can get. He understands your struggles - come to Him - He understands your struggles.

2. He CARES For You - He considers you of value and of worth.

Matthew 6:26 - *Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? NKJV*

God cares for YOU! He cares so much that He will help you with your problems. He will help you deal with them. That's why He is called Wonderful Counselor.

Matthew 11:28 - *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. NKJV*

Folks that is a promise! He will not turn His back on us. He will not abandon us. God cares for us.

3. He COMMITS Himself To You

John 10:27 - *My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. NKJV*

This verse tells me that Jesus speaks to us. If we have a personal relationship with Jesus – He is committed to us and He talks to us.

- He is committed to forgive our past, Heal our past - The Lord knows our past, every moment of it. He is the Wonderful Counselor because He has all the knowledge of our past in His heart and mind. He knows the secret sin of your past. He knows the hidden hurt of your past. He knows the lost dreams of your past. He knows all about your past experiences.
- He walks with us in our present - The Lord knows your present pressures, your present pain, your present temptations, your present trails. He knows this very minute what no other person on earth knows about you. He is wonderful in His knowledge of us.
- He Knows Our Future - Our Lord knows what is ahead of us. He is able to see the future and to guide us through the the valleys. He alone can do this!

Jeremiah 29:11 - *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.*
NKJV

LET THE WONDERFUL COUNSELOR HELP YOU.

1. Be Honest / woman at the well is a great story because its our nature to deflect, change the subject. He's the one who has living water.

2. Listen to Him.

- Through His Word
- Through the words of a pastor
- Through someone you're sitting next to today
- Through someone at work
- Through circumstances
- Through a song
- Though a question / Jesus ask many questions - Make us stop and look at our actions.

Sheep listen to His voice.

3. Do what He says.

Mark 10:17-21 - **17** As Jesus was starting out on his way to Jerusalem, a man came running up to him, knelt down, and asked, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" **18** "Why do you call me good?" Jesus asked. "Only God is truly good. **19** But to answer your question, you know the commandments: 'You must not murder. You must not commit adultery. You must not steal. You must not testify falsely. You must not cheat anyone. Honor your father and mother.'" **20** "Teacher," the man replied, "I've obeyed all these commandments since I was young." **21** **Looking at the man, Jesus felt genuine love for him.** "There is still **one thing** you haven't done," he told him. "Go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." **22** At this the man's face fell, and **he went away sad**, for he had many possessions.

What is Jesus the Wonderful Counselor saying to you today?