

***The Everlasting Father***  
**John 10: 5-11; Text: Isaiah 9.6**  
**Rev. Keith Davis**

Beloved in Christ, the Christmas story is so very simple and straightforward that even little children can sing about it and tell the story themselves. Christmas is the time when baby Jesus was born in Bethlehem. It's when our Savior came into the world. It's as simple as that.

But on the other hand, there's much about Christmas and the Christ child that is complex. There's much about the Christmas story that is simply beyond human comprehension; much that remains wrapped mystery and wonder.

Such as the miracle of the virgin birth: Christ's conception by the power of the Holy Spirit; then there's the enigma of the incarnation: the infinite taking on the finite, God's eternal and divine Son taking on real flesh and bone so that He was fully God and fully man.

Those are such profound mysteries that were it not for God graciously condescending to us, were it not for God graciously revealing these things to us in his Word, we would have remained ignorant of these deep mysteries, we would never be unable to ascertain this our own.

As it is, we cannot understand them, but at least we are aware of them; thus we are made to stand in awe at the surpassing greatness and wisdom of our God. Another divine mystery is placed before us this morning, namely, that Jesus Christ is called the Everlasting Father.

This is a deep and profound mystery because we know that Jesus Christ is the *Son* of God, the Son of the Heavenly Father, the second person of the Holy Trinity. Yet, Isaiah clearly calls Him the *Everlasting Father*. We wonder, '*how can this be*'?

Those who deny the existence of the Trinity point to this verse as evidence that God is really one person, not three. And we have to ask ourselves, what could this possibly mean? We know that there can be no confusion between the persons of the Godhead.

The Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Spirit, and the Spirit is not the Father. And yet Isaiah calls Christ, the everlasting Father. How do we understand this? The key to this riddle is found in John 10 where Jesus tells His disciples: *if you have seen me, you have seen the Father!*

Jesus makes the Father known. In His life, in His ministry, He embodies, He reveals, He pours out the Father's love, the Father's grace, the Father's kindness, the Father's compassion. And so it can be said that Christ is the Everlasting Father—not as He relates to His Father, but as He relates to us and our salvation.

That is essentially what this means; and this morning we are going to take a few moments to consider this puzzle, this mystery, and see what great blessings this brings us. So consider with me how **Christ the Son Embodies the Everlasting Father**. We will look at how

- 1. As the Everlasting Father He Provides Life;**
- 2. As the Everlasting Father He Promises Love;**

### **1. As the Everlasting Father He Provides Life**

To begin with, we consider that most basic biological duty and function of a father: he brings life into being; a father begets children; he gives life. Granted, none of us would be here today were it not for our mothers, yet the father bears responsibility for the proliferation of life.

Now, all of us should all be able to draw the connection between God the Father and life. We attribute the creation of heaven and earth, *of all that lives and breathes on the face of this earth*, to the handiwork of our heavenly Father. He is the Creator and Sustainer of all that is. He is the source of all life.

So with that in mind then, we consider our Savior, who came into this world for what purpose? We mentioned this in last night's sermon—Christ came so that God's people could have life and have it to the full! That was John 10.10 *the thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy, but I have come that they might have life, and have it to the full.*

We read of this purpose also in John 1. 4 *In Him was life, and that life was the light of men.* And what do we hear Jesus saying in John 14. 6? Jesus is calming the troubled heart of Thomas as well as the rest of His disciples; Jesus says *I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

And how can we forget Christ's words of hope and comfort and consolation which he spoke to Martha in the wake of the death of her brother, Lazarus. Jesus said *I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.*

Likewise in John 6, Jesus revealed that he was the bread of life that came down from heaven. *The bread of God in he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.* Later at the end of that chapter, Peter exclaims to Jesus: *Lord to whom shall we go? You have the Words of eternal life!*

And in the Book of Revelation we have the promise of Christ Himself (in Revelation 2 and 22): *to him that overcometh he shall be given to eat from the Tree of Life.* Those are just a fraction of the verses which speak about Christ as the giver of life. Let's pause here a moment to consider this situation. Christ has been sent into this world to bring life, to give life, when mankind had already been given life from God above?

Why is that? What's wrong with man? I think we probably know the answer to that question. When the first man, Adam, fell into sin, he plunged all humanity with him into death, into a state of depravity, where spiritually speaking, we who are in Adam are dead in our trespasses and sins.

So long as we remain in Adam, we cannot escape our fallen condition; we cannot escape our depravity; we cannot escape death and hell. It doesn't matter how good we are, or how pure our blood lines are. All those who are in Adam will perish and die.

But this is where we see that Christ has come as the second Adam, as the Father of a New and lasting and better Covenant; Christ stood where the first Adam fell, and now it can be said that Christ truly is the Father of the Living!

Charles Spurgeon wrote that we brothers and sisters call Adam our father *mournfully*, for by him we were cast out of Paradise, out of Eden; thus we till the ground by the sweat of our brow; in sorrow do mothers bring forth children; and because of father Adam, we are destined to go down to the grave in sorrow.

But we who believe in the Christ of Christmas, we call another man father, namely, the Lord Jesus; we speak of this father not mournfully or sorrowfully but joyfully and triumphantly; for this father has opened the gates to a better Paradise; he has taken away the sweat of toil from our brows, He has invited us to *enter into His rest*.

How so? In His life he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows! In his cruel death on the cross, he bore (in body and soul) the pain and agony brought about by our sin. In His bitter suffering and death, He overcame our heaviest affliction—death and hell.

As we said, Christ did this so that all those who believe in him shall never die, but shall pass from this life--which is nothing but a constant death—into life eternal. That is what it means that Christ is the Everlasting Father. He is the provider of life—new and eternal life!

Beloved, that new life doesn't begin in heaven; it begins right here, right now! That life begins as Christ's Spirit works within us, delivering us from our bondage to sin, making us to live new lives unto the glory of God. For What does Paul say in II Corinthians 5:17? *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation (a new life); the old has gone, the new has come!*

Christ, the *Everlasting Father* has given us new life so we can live as God created us to live, free from the tyranny of sin and Satan, enjoying fellowship and communion with God, worshipping God in Spirit and truth, and living with our neighbor in peace, loving our neighbor, building him up in love, humbling ourselves before our neighbor, seeking to serve his needs, not our own!

## **2. As the Everlasting Father He Provides Love**

So as the Everlasting Father, Christ provides life. But secondly, we notice that He also promises love. All of us here recognize that a father's duty and responsibility extend well beyond giving life. To put it crudely, being a real father requires more than just one's DNA.

Being a real father requires real love. It requires that we provide the care and compassion, provision and protection, encouragement and sympathy, patience and understanding that are necessary in raising our children.

Now, there are many passages in the Old Testament which speak to our heavenly Father's love and care for us. Many of the Psalms, like Psalm 103, and Psalm 86, and Psalm 34 for example, speak to the fact that our Lord is gracious and forgiving and good, he is slow to anger, abounding in love and mercy to all who call upon Him.

Many of the Psalms speak to the fact that God our Father hears the cries, the supplications, the prayers of His children rising up to Him and he answers them. And many of the Psalms also speak to the unfailing character of God's mercy and love.

When we think about the Christ child whom God sent into the world, we see that He embodies these exact virtues and attributes of God! What does John 3:16 say? It tells us that Christ's presence in the world was a product of the Father's love. *God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

And all we have to do is chart Christ's ministry, and see that He came to shed the Father's love abroad. Christ came to lift up the lowly, to exalt the downtrodden, to give hope to the hopeless, to bring joy to the joyless, to bring forgiveness to those deemed unforgivable, to bring into His kingdom, those who were cast out.

*Matthew 9:35-36: Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw*

*the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.*

*Matthew 15:32 Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.*

And in Matthew 20, Jesus was on the road to Jericho, with a large crowd following him. Suddenly two blind men called out for him as he passed, and they begged him to heal them. The crowd rebuked these two men and told them to be quiet. Verse 34 says, *Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him.*

And how can we forget the scene where Jesus weeps over Jerusalem, His own people, because they would not believe in Him. So, in Christ we see the love and compassion and mercy of the Father on display.

And where do we see the ultimate expression of God's love and mercy? Is it not on the cross itself where our dear Savior died? That was the ultimate display, the ultimate proof of the Father's love for us. No greater love has a man than this, than that he lay down his life for his friends.

Hear the testimony of 1 John 4:9-10 *This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.*

So while on earth, our Christ displays the Father's love and compassion and mercy. But He does more. Now that Christ our Savior is in heaven, we see His love as Everlasting Father in other ways as well. Just as a father shows his care for his children by praying for them, so too, Christ prays for us.

The Bible tells us that Jesus lives to make constant intercession for us (Hebrews 7:25). Christ perfects our prayers in the hearing of our Father. Likewise our Lord, in His love, disciplines us; what child is not disciplined by his father? So the Lord sends us trials, hardships, sufferings for the purpose of deepening our faith and love and dependence upon Him.

Hebrews also tells us that Christ is sympathetic to our weaknesses. Hebrews 2:16-18 *For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.*

So Christ the everlasting Father now lives to help us, to serve us, to sympathize with us. He himself is the very heart (bosom) of the heavenly Father's love and affections. And know this too, beloved, because Jesus is called the *Everlasting Father* we will know His life, His love, His care forevermore.

Romans 8:35-39 Paul writes: *For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

So you see, what Isaiah was telling God's people in his day, what he tells you and me in our day, is that this is the reason why Christ and His Kingdom will prevail. Isaiah lived and wrote in the midst of crumbling kingdom, in the midst of weak and sinful kings who could not protect their kingdom, who fell away from God, who (humanly speaking) were failures.

But Isaiah says that this child that is born, this son who is given will be different from any other king, and His kingdom will be set apart from any other kingdom. He will be a King who sits on his father's throne forever and ever, and His will be a kingdom that will not fail.

Why? Because He is Wonderful, Counselor, Almighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. He is Jesus Christ, God's own Son, and He came at Christmas to make sinners right with God, to make the way clear to His heavenly Home, so that through Him, and by Him, we might be where He is in glory!

So in conclusion, beloved, we can say that *yes*, there *are* aspects of Christmas, aspects of Christ's birth, that will remain a mystery to us, riddles whose answers will remain unknown and locked away. But the Good news is that God deprives us, He never locks away the joy and the delight and the comfort that flows from these mysteries.

We may rejoice even in the face of things which we cannot fully understand, which we cannot fully explain; that's because God has made revealed to us, He has made plain to us all we need to know, and that is witnessed in His Son Jesus Christ. In Him we have eternal life; in Him we are eternally loved. There is nothing more (no greater gift) that we can ask for at Christmas than this! Amen.