

ADJECTIVES THAT ADORE

C. Irving Benson said this about the gifted writer of yesteryear, F. W. Boreham: "There was an exuberance about his adjectives and he always had more than he could use. A man's adjectives are often more characteristic than his nouns. His nouns are names for common objects, which he is more or less forced to use; his adjectives are the distinguishing marks he places upon them, and reveal his individuality. There is much to be learned of the spirit of Frank Boreham from a study of his adjectives." Adjectives are words that describe or modify another person, place or thing. In grammar, an adjective is a describing word, the main syntactic role of which is to qualify a noun or noun phrase, giving more information about the object signified.

I never want to get away from my lifetime practice that most of our long time members of Christchurch have already captured, which is to dedicate from time to time an entire message to the glory and praise of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. God knows that I love Him and He also knows I could love Him better. The Bible prophetically says of Jesus, *"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"* (Isaiah 9:6). These describing words of the character and person of Christ are so perfectly descriptive that they become themselves nouns. Grammatically speaking, these words are called attributive nouns or adjectival nouns. This is when nouns are used as adjectives. Isaiah is one of my favorite prophets. I would say of him what one has said of Shakespeare: "the ink flowed from his pen like golden pollen from the stems of shaken lilies." As God is giving Isaiah these words, I visualize the prophet getting caught up with these descriptive adjectives so that he verbally shouts, "He is all these things and more!"

When you speak of Jesus, how do you describe Him? Benard has delightfully said that "the name of Jesus is honey in the mouth, melody in the ear and joy in the heart."

Today I want to take these describing words from Isaiah that allow us to see Christ for Who He is. When we see Him for Who He is, we shall better see ourselves. We shall better see others. We shall better serve Him. The result is that our prayers will take on greater passion. Our service will take on new meaning. Our studies will take on enhancing nuances. When we speak of Jesus, He will present Himself in our conversation as we disappear.

I. He is the Wonderful One.

"...And his name shall be called Wonderful..." (Isaiah 9:6). While three of our grandkids and I were out at the park during their recent visit they enjoyed the swings immensely. Caleb could swing himself; what a relief! On the other hand, Christopher and Cara could

not, therefore I did what every doting grandfather would do – I pushed them. They kept asking me to go higher and so I did something that thrilled them to the max – I pushed their swing high enough that I could run under them. They loved it and you might have already guessed the next words out of their mouths: “Do it again!” Before long, I was wet with sweat and I kept doing it again and again.

In his book entitled *Orthodoxy*, G. K. Chesterton said, “Because children have abounding vitality, because they are in spirit fierce and free, therefore they want things repeated and unchanged. They always say, “Do it again”; and the grown-up person does it again until he is nearly dead. For grown-up people are not strong enough to exult in monotony. But perhaps God is strong enough to exult in monotony. It is possible that God says every morning, “Do it again” to the sun; and every evening, “Do it again” to the moon. It may not be automatic necessity that makes all daisies alike; it may be that God makes every daisy separately, but has never got tired of making them. It may be that He has the eternal appetite of infancy; for we have sinned and grown old, and our Father is younger than we.” Children do not lose the wonder of the simplest joys.

When the famed evangelist Gypsy Smith was in his eighties, he was asked what was the secret of his ministry. His reply was, “I have never lost the wonder.”

Jesus is so wonderful that God says, “That’s His name.” Our English language simply combines the two words, “wonder” and “full.” Jesus is full of wonder. How like the child we need to become, never bored with His wonder. Later in his prophecy Isaiah records God saying, “*This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise. But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel*” (Isaiah 43:21,22). This is saying people actually become bored with God and therefore stop fellowshiping with Him. When we lose our fascination and love to the Lord, we need to return to doing the first things that brought us close to Him. Jesus said, “*Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works...*” (Revelation 2:4,5).

II. He is the Perfect Counsellor.

As the Good Shepherd, Jesus will never lead you astray. He may lead you through detours, dead ends and at times, dry holes, but all along you are on a journey that is not a mistake but all part of His master plan. I love the words of the song that says, “I’m trusting to the unseen hand that guides me through this weary land and some sweet day I’ll reach that strand, still guided by the unseen hand.”

Have you ever said that you just needed to talk to somebody? Well our Counsellor is in and He is ready to talk. He’ll give you direction for the right journey, correct you from the wrong path and/or give you assurance you are centered in the will of God. “*...His name shall be called ...Counsellor...*” (Isaiah 9:6).

III. He is the Mighty God.

Jesus is the God of creation. But not only that, He is the mighty God. There is nothing too hard for Him. God questioned Abraham, *“Is any thing too hard for the LORD?...”* (Genesis 18:14). God asked Jeremiah, *“Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?”* (Jeremiah 32:27). The Lord answered the question ten verses earlier: *“Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee”* (Jeremiah 32:17).

It is so easy to feel stripped of all ability to do anything about our overwhelming circumstances, but we can say with Paul, *“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me”* (Philippians 4:13).

IV. He is the Everlasting Father.

When kids grow up, marry and leave your home, you may discover a father you have become sidelined. Once children are grown they have entered their own life and their own family. In the family of God we never lose that closeness; we become more inextricably and even mystically united to Him in such a way that He becomes our Everlasting Father. *“Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him”* (Psalm 103:13). *“...For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee”* (Hebrews 13:5).

V. He is the Prince of Peace.

Chaos reigns in the earth. In Christ however there is peace. The one attribute I can testify that identifies what it's like to be saved is that I have peace. The world tries to counterfeit what only Jesus can give. That's why our Lord said, *“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid”* (John 14:27).

Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace are all adjectival nouns that tell me Who Jesus is or should be to those of us who know Him. If I may borrow the words of Dante, “If the world might know the heart he had within Him, much as it praiseth, it would praise Him more.” There are not enough adjectives to modify our Lord and Savior. Suffice it to say, everything is Jesus and Jesus is everything!

-Pastor Pope-