

Who is this Jesus? (Quality Good)

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[0 : 0 0] as we approach the Christmas season I thought I would like to explore with you or perhaps re-explore the question as to just who is this Jesus that people are singing about talking about some it would seem very likely that they have not the remotest idea of who he is I'm sure that's not true of you but nevertheless I think it would be good for us to just be reminded that it's not the tinsel Jesus that some people seem to make a fuss of it's not the crib Jesus that will appear in some churches who is this Jesus then?

well there's one important thing for us to remember the Jesus who appeared on that first day when he was born in Bethlehem was the Jesus who had been forecast or prophesied in the Old Testament and it's important for us because if he's not the one who is spoken of in the Old Testament then he is not the Saviour and so we need to be quite sure and this evening I just want to look at the two very familiar passages in Isaiah's prophecy relating to the birth of the Christ and and just remind ourselves reassure ourselves that this is the Saviour this is the Jesus at home in whom we believe and whom we love and seek to serve that Jesus foretold hundreds of years then before his birth turn if you will to Isaiah 7 and we'll look at verses 14 to 17 just very briefly therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name

Emmanuel butter and honey shall he eat that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good for before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings the Lord shall bring upon thee and upon thy people and upon thy father's house days that have not come from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah even the king of Assyria so here is the clear messianic prophecy prophecy set in the context of Isaiah's prophecy and a certain conversation he was having with Ahaz the king in which he invited Ahaz to ask a sign of the Lord well we haven't time tonight to look at the context particularly

Ahaz refused to ask a sign and this displeased the prophet and it displeased God and the Lord responded that he himself would give to them a sign and this is the sign a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Emmanuel in the light of this very clear prophecy it's all the more amazing that many people did not acknowledge Jesus to be the true Messiah first of all then a virgin shall conceive something's going to happen then which is contrary to nature a miracle is going to be involved with regard to the birth of the Christ a virgin a young woman approaching marriageable age still under the care of her parents still being protected in her home not yet as it were in the public domain a virgin shall conceive and bear a son amazing prophecy we're all so familiar with the Christmas message that we overlook the uniqueness of the birth of the Saviour sometimes a virgin shall conceive and that is precisely what the record of the New

Testament confirms Matthew writing about the events surrounding the birth of Christ he says it happened like this his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Ghost and he quotes this very scripture as he completes the narrative all this was done that it might be fulfilled it was spoken of the Lord by the prophet saying behold a virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son that was the sign and there is the reality that was the prophecy here is the fulfillment and the Jesus of whom we speak the Jesus in whom we trust the Jesus who we hope through the shedding of his blood has washed away all our sins was born of a virgin not of any human procreation or generation but a work of the

[6 : 46] Holy Ghost a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Emmanuel we should be looking at a number of names given prophetically to the Christ in Isaiah's prophecies I don't think we're to understand it that these names were literally given to Jesus in the home at Nazareth he was known as Emmanuel I suspect that he would have been known by his name Jesus but nevertheless they shall call his name Emmanuel and Matthew of course explains to us the meaning of that word which is being interpreted God with us we need to understand that point in order to be able to understand the attitude of the shepherds and the wise men who came to him in his infant days they came and worshipped we come from the east the wise men said to worship where is he that is born king of the

Jews the angels came and worshipped now worship can only rightly be given to God his name shall be Emmanuel God with us theologically John covers this point and explains the meaning of Emmanuel like this the word he says and he's already identified that the word was with God and the word was God and the word was the creator and Jesus himself is the word well the word was made flesh and dwelt among us the word was made flesh Emmanuel God with us we speak sometimes of the

God man because he was really and truly man and really and truly God but the emphasis is here that he dwelt among us could God could the eternal God the Holy Father the Spirit dwell among us impossible he had to become man so he could dwell among us Emmanuel the word made flesh and dwelling among us so we've got those two points we just pluck out of this section in Isaiah the virgin birth and his name this is our Jesus isn't it the word made flesh dwelling among us the apostles declared and we behold his glory full of grace and truth well perhaps we haven't had that full view of the glory of God in the face of the

Lord Jesus Christ there are times aren't there when we glimpse something of his preciousness we have a view by faith of the dear Lord Jesus and we too worship and adore him who came down to this earth for us let's move on to Isaiah 9 and particularly verse where are we well verses 6 and 7 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 of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end upon the throne of

David and upon his kingdom to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this again a prophecy concerning the Christ in the context of Isaiah's prophecies and you'll notice at the beginning of the chapter references to the land of Zebulun and Naphtali and Galilee interesting to remember that geographical setting for the prophecy concerning the Christ unto us a child is born unto us a son is given one might ask exactly who is it that Isaiah is speaking on behalf of when he says us himself and who when in one sense he is speaking of the

[12 : 44] Israelites the Jewish people unto us a child is born and that was a crucial point because the Messiah had to come from the line of David he could not be born in any other dynasty but that of King David unto us a child is born so in a general way in a literal way that is true but in a narrower way I believe Isaiah was speaking on behalf of himself and other believers amongst the Jewish people as we were noticing on the Lord's day they are not all Israel that are of Israel and there are many people who belong to the same nation as Jesus the same family even who did not believe on him but unto us a child is born unto us the son is given I believe God's people Jew and Gentile in all ages can by faith enter into the words of Isaiah here unto us a child is born it's a lovely and wonderful thing isn't it when a child is born into a family unto us we've got this little child well this is the privilege of

God's people unto us into our family a child is born a son is given he's one that belongs to us and we belong to him the government shall be upon his shoulder well I'll link that up with the latter part of verse 7 later on but move on to notice again the prophet says his name shall be called wonderful or wonderful counsellor wonderful meaning distinguished extraordinary in fact it's a word that implies the miraculous and that is just the right word to use isn't it to think of the Lord Jesus

Christ he is wonderful a wonderful counsellor this word wonderful just for a moment so 139 David was speaking about the absolute knowledge that God had of him oh Lord thou hast searched me and known me thou knowest my down sitting and mine uprising and understandest my thought far off there's not a word in my mouth in my tongue but oh Lord thou knowest it altogether and he goes on to say such knowledge is too wonderful for me it is high I cannot attain unto it whither shall I go from thy spirit or whither shall I flee from thy presence if I ascend up into heaven thou art there if I make my bed in hell behold thou art there exactly the same word wonderful distinguished extraordinary miraculous the knowledge that God has of you and me it is complete he knows all about every bone and every body and every sinew in our bodies he knows all about the intricate workings of our minds he knows all about our blood flow and our heartbeat and our pulse rate he knows everything about us physically he knows everything about us mentally our thought processes our ambitions our hopes our desires he knows all about our secret things he knows all about every aspect of our life and who is it who does this the wonderful counselor the wonderful wonder working

God Paul in the New Testament is also amazed as he reflects upon the same truth he says oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out for who hath known the mind of the Lord who hath been his counselor so we can link up these admiring sentiments of God's people with regard to the totality of the knowledge of God this is our wonderful God our wonderful counselor our wonderful Lord he knows all about us isn't it good to be able to go to someone like that who knows all about us is there a nerve in our hands is there a bone in our bodies is there an ache somewhere that troubles us his name is wonderful he has a total comprehensive understanding of everything other things in our lives that we don't understand what he is the wonderful counselor that means he's full of wisdom and skill some people might be very knowledgeable but pretty clueless when it comes to practical things others others may be quite expert in a practical way but not be so gifted in understanding matters but our

God is perfect in both he is full of wisdom and full of skill that infinite wisdom that he possesses is used on behalf of his people he he can never be wrong footed he can never be left wondering what to do he is the wonderful counselor this word has come into prominence of recent years the whole industry has grown up of counselors I had a very kind letter the other day after my coat was stolen inquiring if I would like the services of a counselor to help me overcome the problems that I suffered there they are waiting to pounce these wonderful counselors but I didn't take up the offer I didn't think I needed it really but I do need this wonderful counselor wonderful counselor perfect counselor knowledge of everything well is that the

[20 : 35] Jesus of the New Testament that was a prophecy there's a New Testament tally we need to be sure about this absolutely confident that the Jesus that we believe in is the one who God promised and whom God sent well listen Luke is describing that occasion when Jesus was left behind in Jerusalem as his parents set off for Nazareth and then had to come back looking for him and at the end of that narrative he has this to say the child grew and waxed strong in spirit filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon him and then you remember that he amazed the doctors in the temple all that heard him were astonished but his understanding and answers he as a child he could dispute and discuss and debate and set forth the truth with the most learned of men and that feature is very apparent throughout the gospel records never man spake like this man that was a testimony of those who were sent to arrest him on one occasion they went back empty handed they were dumbfounded by the wisdom wherewith he spoke to them yes

Isaiah was right this is the Jesus of the new testament this wonderful counsellor the mighty god that's his name the mighty god we must never do anything to undermine or to minimize his divinity the human nature of the lord jesus will be appealing to us and attractive to us the man of like passions with us the man who walked and talked and experienced life on earth in all its hardships and difficulties and problems but let us never forget that he is the son of god the mighty god he is here termed what I was looking for was yes here it is this word from

Deuteronomy the lord your god is a god of gods and lord of lords a great god a mighty and a terrible which regardeth not persons nor taketh reward he does execute judgment similar passage to what we have in front of us this is the mighty god so we are we're left aren't we to reflect upon the holy trinity that tremendous being father son and holy ghost one god in three persons and one member of that holy trinity has come down to this earth god the son has come down and indwelt a body first of all a little baby's body and then a boy's body and then an adult's body body the mighty god well is that the god of the gospels is that the jesus of the of the gospels surely we have to concur that it is the mighty god what a display of mighty godhood was given by jesus in the boat with the disciples when it was filled with water and just about to sink and he had to be awakened out of his sleep and he stood up in the boat presumably knee deep at least in water and he spoke to the winds and the waves and just said be still the word the word that had brought those waters into being in the first place the word that had brought the wind into being in the first place the word that brought the world into existence just talks to his world and says you be quiet you be still and there was a great car this is the mighty god we see also the mighty god in the grave of lazarus he had been dead some days his body was decomposing he was wrapped round with grave clothes but the mighty god descends into that cave and addresses the corpse and says lazarus come forth and he that was dead arose what a spectacle to see a putrefying corpse suddenly spring to life again the mighty god don't we get a glimpse of that in in the garden at the garden tomb on that first lord's day when very early in the morning jesus rose from the dead vain was the stone there's an angel sitting on it by the side of the empty tomb vain was the grave clothes vain was the hand of death the mighty god had risen from the dead and we perhaps can be reminded of one of the visions of john in revelation he's speaking of those forces and those beasts those evil powers that will make war with the lamb and he says the lamb shall overcome

them for he is lord of lords and king of kings and they that are with him are called and chosen and faithful yes the mighty god is in heaven he sits at the right hand of the father he's there on the throne of grace he's there waiting for your prayers and praises to ascend up to god that he might take them and cleanse them and present them to his father he ever lives to make intercession for those who come unto god by him he is the mighty god and what shall we say of the day that is coming is pressing ever nearer and closer to us when he will come again to this earth and every eye shall see him and he will be there in the clouds and all the holy angels with him and the great multitude of the redeemed of the lord he will be there as the mighty god the god of the whole creation the god of universe and everyone will acknowledge he is the mighty god he shall be called the everlasting father this is one of the most difficult expressions to understand literally it is the father of eternity i think the best way that we can understand it but we must never confuse the son of god with the holy father they are two distinct persons in the god head nevertheless i think we can understand it as the lord is indeed a father to his people there are many words that are used to describe the relationship between the lord and his people aren't there he's the husband he's a shepherd he's their lord their redeemer their saviour their friend their comforter all sorts of words are used to describe the relationship also father he is a father to them what about psalm 113 13 like as a father pitieth his children so the lord pitieth them that fear him he knoweth our frame he remembereth that we are dust can we think of jesus there in that psalm the everlasting father the father of all ages he has been that to his people throughout history he has been the father figure to them the one who provides for them the one who protects them the one that helps them the one who is there when they need him the everlasting father here is a word from the new testament it is first of all a word addressed to some of the folk at Corinth some of the believers at Corinth who were conducting themselves in a wrong way they were not separating themselves from the idolatrous world around them and Paul is warning them of the danger of their situation and he says wherefore come out from among them

and be separate saith the Lord and touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you and will be a father unto you and ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord almighty and that sort of triggers something in your mind straight away doesn't it with regard to the parable of the prodigal son and the father figure in that parable I will receive you I will be a father unto you there Jesus describes the erring son who wandered far off and wasted his life and spent his money and through his profligacy was reduced to utter poverty and penury and he comes back dirty and ragged and asks for a job in a household as a servant but I'll be a father unto you and with what love did the father receive him now isn't this a wonderful promise to his erring children the lord waits to be gracious to you have you strayed away have you wandered from the fold well he calls you to come back with a promise that he will be this father to you this father figure this forgiving loving kind providing overwhelming one his name finally shall be called prince of peace prince of peace he is in david's line but david was a man of war solomon his son was a man of peace but the peace spoken here i think we must understand in a spiritual sense this man shall be the peace the prince of peace in what way then is he the prince of peace to his people is this the jesus of the new testament well let's just be clear on that he most certainly is john 14 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 there's the prince of peace the disciples were facing as far as they were concerned a very dark and unknown future they've been told that they were to go forth as sheep amongst wolves there was the likelihood of bitter opposition and persecution and death but he says peace i leave with you my peace i give unto you explain for us to think in a little more detail by paul writing to the romans a very familiar a very wonderful passage speaking of the lord jesus who was delivered for our offenses and was raised again for our justification therefore being justified by faith we have peace

[35 : 28] with god through our lord jesus christ there he is the prince of peace concerned that his people should know peace of heart and how can they know peace of heart in this troubled world how can they know peace of heart when they acknowledge their own sinfulness and their unworthiness well there's only one way and that is to look to him to trust in him who was delivered for our offenses raised again for our justification there is life for a look at the crucified one eternal life and profound peace being justified by faith that trembling look of a sinner to christ that one who wonders whether there's any hope for them any possibility that they might be saved that looks to jesus that moment is justified and at peace with god through our lord jesus christ and by the spirit that gift of peace is brought into the hearts of god's people they know they now have access with god and communion with god and can talk to god as a as a friend all through this man jesus this god man this wonderful wonderful person i'll leave the aspects of his kingdom and his kingship perhaps till tomorrow night our time is gone but oh as we've been trying to think then about jesus what think ye of christ whose son is he what does he mean to you can you say this is my beloved and this is my friend i do hope so that we all will be able to say that and mean it and know that it's true