

# Wonderful Jesus!

**"His name shall be called wonderful."**

Isaiah 9:6

How often have you heard the expression, "What's in a name?" In times past the names that were given to people usually meant something. Names were very meaningful to the native peoples of North America, for example. Such names as Deer Slayer, Eagle Eye, Sitting Bull, or Charging Buffalo, tell us something about the men who possessed them. This tendency to use names that are expressive is still with us. Often a nick-name will indicate some peculiarity or character-trait. Often a man's nickname is nearer to the real man than his given name.

Have you ever known anyone nicknamed "Moose," "Shorty," or "Lumpy?" The reason for the nickname is usually pretty obvious. This is very common in the realm of sports. How many of you remember "Tiger Williams" who played for the Leafs in the 1970's? I can remember seeing the great Maurice Richard. Anyone who ever saw him play for the Montreal Canadiens knows why he was called the "Rocket!" Then there was the "Golden Jet," Bobby Hull, and Eddie Shack, who was known as "Clear the Track Shack!" He was like a bull in a china shop, and anybody who got in his way was bowled over, regardless of what uniform they were wearing - even if they were on his own team! You just didn't get in his way. "Clear the track Shack!" The name perfectly described the man.

What about Sir Winston Churchill, nicknamed "The Bulldog," because of the determination that was so fiercely reflected in the set of his jowls? Then there's Mafia boss John Gotti, dubbed "The Teflon Don," because the feds could never make charges against him stick. You see, many of these names tell us a great deal about the person to whom they are attached.

The ancient Israelites would often choose a name for their child that symbolized what the parents hoped the child would become. Mary and Joseph were told to name their son "Jesus," a Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua, which literally means, "The Lord saves." What could be more appropriate than that name of all names?

Did you know that there are some 256 names given in the Bible for the Lord Jesus Christ? I suppose this was because He was infinitely beyond all that any one name could ever express. Some of the most beautiful of these names appear in Isaiah 9:6 ... *"These will be his royal titles: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."* Let's take just a few minutes and consider the adjective *wonderful*. *"His name shall be called Wonderful!"* as it says in the King James Version of the Bible. Does it fit the Lord Jesus? Has he lived up to this name given him eight hundred years before he was born?

The adjective **wonderful** means something that is transcendentally beyond the common; something that is way beyond the ordinary. We say that Niagara Falls or the Grand Canyon is wonderful because there is nothing else like them. They are two of the Seven Wonders of the World. Jesus Christ is the wonder of all wonders! He is the Great Wonder of the world, for there never has been anyone else like him, and there never will be again. Why?

First of all, his **birth** was wonderful. It was wonderful in that he had but one human parent. It was the Holy Spirit who conceived the Christ-child in Mary, so that Jesus possessed the nature of man and the nature of God.

His birth was wonderful in that this King of kings and Lord of lords, who, in his pre-human state, was co-equal in honour, power, and glory with the Father, chose to humble himself and be born not in a palace, but in a stable.

His birth was wonderful in that angels proclaimed it from the sky to a few humble shepherds who were watching their flocks by night. What does that tell us? It tells us that Jesus didn't come to hobnob with the world's so-called important people, the elite, but he came for the average "Joe" as well, people just like you and me.

It was wonderful in that his birth was also announced by the appearance of an intensely luminous object in the heavens. Was it a star going supernova at just the right time, or was it the conjunction of three planets as some think, or was it something miraculous and supernatural? It doesn't really matter. The point is that the timing was perfect, indicating that the One who would call himself the "Light of World" was being born. Yes, there many things about our Lord's birth that were wonderful.

Second, his **character** was wonderful - even as a child! Luke records that, "*The child grew up healthy and strong. He was filled with wisdom beyond his years, and God placed his special favour upon him*" (2:40). Then he adds that, "*Jesus grew both in height and in wisdom, and he was loved by God and by all who knew him*" (Luke 2:52).

It is absolutely wonderful that the greatest character ever known should have come out of such obscurity, to become the most famous person in history. On his return from the Holy Land a minister was asked what had made the greatest impression upon him while there. "Nazareth," he answered, and for this reason:

**"The same kind of people are living there today as in the time of Jesus, and they are about the worst specimens of humanity I have seen anywhere. Lazy, lustful, ignorant, and unspeakably wicked, and to think of His coming out from such a people is to me a sure proof of His divinity. Had I not been a believer in His divinity before going there, I should have to believe in it now."**

Third, our Lord's **life** was wonderful for its unselfishness, its sinlessness, and its usefulness. Even his enemies could not bring against Him any charge other than that He claimed God for His Father, and that He would do good works on the Sabbath day. This is quite clear from the account of our Lord's trial. In Matthew 26:60 we read this about the high priests and the high council: *“But even though they found many who agreed to give false witness, there was no testimony they could use.”*

Jesus himself, shortly before his crucifixion, said to his disciples, *“I don't have much more time to talk to you, because the prince of this world approaches. He has no power (no hold) over me, but I will do what the Father requires of me ...”* (John 14:30-31). In other words, Satan could make no accusations about sin with respect to Jesus.

Not the slightest bit of evidence of selfish-ness or self-interest can be found in the story of his life. He had the power to turn stones into bread but went hungry for forty days with-out doing it. On the other hand, he had compassion on the hungry multitude when he fed the five thousand!

He wept over Jerusalem, because he knew what destiny awaited the city. It would be leveled by the Romans in 70 A.D. If the city had embraced our Lord, its destiny would have been different. On the other hand, Jesus marched steadfastly towards his own destiny, the Cross of Calvary! He lived for others every day of his matchless life. His compassion was absolutely wonderful.

Fourth, his **teaching** was wonderful, both in what he taught, and in the way he taught. Jesus said, *“Don't misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the Law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to fulfill them”* (Matt. 5:17). He then elevated these Scriptures to their highest level of meaning and clarity.

He understood so well that the Old Testament already contained every deep truth in seed form that God wanted to convey to man. Our Lord's teachings, which are the foundation for the entire New Testament, are nothing less than the Old Testament seeds coming into full bloom. Have our Lord's teachings ever been equaled? Psychiatrist J.T. Fisher states:

**“If you were to take the sum total of all authoritative articles ever written by the most qualified psychologists and psychiatrists on the subject of mental health, and if you were to combine them and refine them ... you would have an awkward and incomplete summation of the Sermon on the Mount. And it would suffer immeasurably through comparison. For nearly two thousand years Christians have been holding in their hands the compete answer to the restless and fruitless yearnings of the world. Here rests the blueprint for successful human life with optimism, mental health, and contentment.”**

Historian Philip Schaff describes our Lord's intellect as being, “**Clear as the sky, bracing as the mountain air, sharp and penetrating as a sword.**” The Bible says that believers can have the “mind of Christ!” How does it happen? By reading, meditating, and memorizing his Word. His teaching was absolutely wonderful. Whenever you sit at his footstool and read his Word, you are learning from the teacher of the ages, one who far surpasses Plato, Socrates, Kant, or any other teacher. Jesus didn't just teach truth, he said, “***I am the truth!***” (John 14:6).

Fifth, his **death** was wonderful because it paid in full for the sins of every human being. Now God's sense of justice has been completely satisfied. Sin has been paid for, and forgiveness is available to all who put their faith and trust in Christ.

Sixth, his resurrection was wonderful because it guarantees that all believers will experience their own resurrection. The Bible describes death as the “***last enemy***” (1 Cor. 15:26) and boldly proclaims that, “***Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?***” (1 Cor. 15:54-55).

Yes, Jesus Christ is true to his name because he is a wonderful Saviour right now. You only have to lift your eyes and look around to see that his wonderful salvation is spreading across the face of the earth at this very moment. Many in China and India are coming to Christ every day, embracing our Lord as their personal Lord and Saviour. Christianity is spreading rapidly in Africa and South America. And I am convinced that revival is coming here, yes, even to smug, complacent, self-centered North America. There is a vast, growing chorus of voices who are naming the name of Christ as Lord and Saviour, and who are throwing the lie back into the teeth of those who say that Christianity is dying out. There has never been a time when the love of Jesus Christ gripped the hearts of so many people on planet earth as it does today.

Does it grip our hearts? Has the wonder of our Lord taken hold of us? Or are we caught in the ice cold grip of those whose eyes are tightly shut to the wonder of Christ, those whose minds are asleep in the slumber of complacency, and those who are spiritually comatose? If that is the case, then I say to us all, “***Wake up, O sleeper!***” ...

***Turn your eyes upon Jesus.***  
***Look full in his wonderful face.***  
***And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,***  
***In the light of his glory and grace.***

## Points to Ponder

*“His name shall be called wonderful.” - Isaiah 9:6*

What's in a name? Often a great deal! A man's nick-name may be nearer to the real man than his given name. Jesus had many titles and names by which he was known. He was infinitely beyond all that any one name could ever express. One of the most beautiful names used in describing Christ is "*wonderful*." Has he lived up to this name? Consider:

1. His **birth** was wonderful in its miraculous nature and yet humbleness of spirit.
2. His **character** was wonderful. As a child he was loved by God and all who knew him (Luke 2:52). As a man he was perfect!
3. His **life** was wonderful. At his trial he was convicted, not of any wrongdoing, but for claiming to be God!
4. His **teaching** was wonderful. His Sermon on the Mount has been described as the "Mount Everest of ethics, morality, and beauty."
5. His **death** was wonderful. It has paid in full for your sins and mine. God's justice and mercy have both been satisfied!
6. His **resurrection** was wonderful. Death, our last enemy, has been defeated ...  
*“Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?”* (1 Cor. 15:54-55)

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus.  
Look full in his wonderful face.  
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,  
In the light of his glory and grace.*

## Our Wonderful God!

### Isaiah 7:14

*The Lord himself will give you a sign. Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel – “God is with us.”*

**Isaiah 9:2, 6-7**

**2** *The people who walk in darkness will see a great light - a light that will shine on all who live in the land where death casts its shadow...*

**6** *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given. And the government will rest on his shoulders. These will be his royal titles: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 His ever expanding, peaceful government will never end. He will rule forever, with justice and righteousness, from the throne of his ancestor David. The passionate commitment of the Lord Almighty will guarantee this!*