

Our Trustworthy King: Everlasting Father

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[0:00] It's always risky to talk about politics from a pulpit, isn't it? Our church is a non-political organization.

We don't take a side. We're neither Republican or Democrat. What we do say, though, is as followers of Jesus, we are to exercise our citizenship for His glory.

And so we don't take sides, but you know what? It's okay to talk about politics. I don't know about you, but over the last several weeks, the political theater has been full of very interesting outworkings.

Coming off the November elections, all of us, if not most of us, have been watching our political leaders, both on a federal and state level, engage in public discourse, to say it nicely.

To push agendas. And sometimes when you're observing these things, it feels like you're watching your parents fight. Now, don't get me wrong.

[1:19] I am so grateful for God's Word. It is God who has instituted human government as a common grace to withhold evil and to promote good.

And I am particularly grateful to be a citizen of this country and this form of government. But can I ask you a question?

What has been the effect in your heart of all the political saber-rattling that's been going on? What's been happening in you?

Have you been tuning it out? Eh, whatever. Have you been digging in your heels for your particular party?

Are you becoming cynical? Are you saying, it is what it is? Or has there been something stirring in you?

[2:26] As there has been with me? Especially at this time of year. I don't know about you, but as I've been watching the political theater, I have found in me a deep longing for someone to govern us who is wise and is powerful and exercises his reign over us in perfect love.

Is anybody else feeling that? I don't know about you, but I want a leader whose love is sure and his reign is secure.

So in light of that, this morning I bring you good news of great joy for all people. I bring you glad tidings.

For this morning I bring to you a message. A two-word message. It comes in the form of a title. Everlasting Father.

And those two words, that title is to put hope in your heart. It is good news for you today.

[3:57] Now if you haven't been with us, we've been working our way through Isaiah chapter 9 verse 6. And we've been looking over the last few weeks at each of these titles. Wonderful Counselor. Mighty God was last week.

And this week we're talking about Everlasting Father. These are titles of Emmanuel. This child to be born.

This son given to us. Isaiah who wrote Isaiah, the book. He wrote this prophecy 700 plus years before Jesus was born.

And it's in 714 that he writes this prophecy of this one, this child who will be born to a virgin.

And his name will be called Emmanuel. Which means God with us. Because this child is God with us.

[4:55] The word became flesh and dwelt among us. And as the book of Isaiah unfolds, in chapter 9, we learn more about Emmanuel.

That the government is going to be on the shoulders. That he's going to have names given to him. Wonderful Counselor. Mighty God. Everlasting Father. Prince of Peace. And of his government. It will increase. From this time forth and forevermore. And so when you think about these things, you've got to understand that Wonderful Counselor is a title of Emmanuel. Emmanuel. Divine Wisdom with us. Wonderful Counselor. Mighty God. Divine Power with us. Everlasting Father. What I'm going to show you this morning is that this title is about the manner by which Emmanuel reigns over his people.

[6:05] It's the way he reigns. It's the way he reigns. Of course, Prince of Peace is Emmanuel. Peace with us.

And what Isaiah tells us in Isaiah 9, 1 through 7 is that this child, Emmanuel, is going to come into our darkness.

He's going to come into our gloom. He's going to come into our gloom. He's going to come into oppression and into hostility. And he's going to change it.

From this time forth and forevermore. This morning, I bring you good tidings of great joy for all people.

And it's not just this child was born 2,000 years ago. It's that just this child is alive and he's reigning on high right now.

[7:08] This child born to us is ruling over us. And his love is sure.

And his reign is secure. So let's look at these two words. This message of hope. This title. Everlasting Father. This is the king we all long for. When we look at this title, Everlasting Father. We're going to see a word that is going to capture the heart of the king. It's the word father. It's capturing his posture of heart to those in his kingdom.

His is a loving rule. And then we're going to look at that word everlasting. Which is going to emphasize the duration of his reign.

[8:09] Forever. It's a secure reign. He's never going to abandon his throne. And so his love is sure.

His reign is secure. This morning as we are contemplating Christmas. I want you to take heart. Because this little baby born to us is now the risen king reigning over us. So with all that said, let's look to this word father.

For to us a child is born. To us a son is given. And the government shall be upon his shoulder. And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor. Mighty God. Everlasting Father.

This is the title of this son. Of this child to be born. And maybe some of you right now are experiencing some kind of internal conflict.

[9:18] Because you know this is a prophecy of the Messiah. The second person of the Trinity. And here we have the Messiah being referenced as everlasting father.

And so in your inner being you may be thinking something like, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait. I'm a Trinitarian. And I know that the second person of the Trinity is distinct from the first person of the Trinity.

And it doesn't really make much sense that the son is being referenced as the father. In fact, that sounds like some kind of heresy. Which it is. It is. Isaiah, what's going on, buddy?

Well, I'm glad to tell you it's not that. It's not a Trinitarian problem. But if it's not that, then what is it? Well, let me help you.

What is meant by that word father? How it's being used. You ready? The first thing I want you to notice is the immediate context.

[10:26] In 9.6 we read that the government shall be upon this son's shoulder. This person's shoulder. And then we read in verse 7 of the increase of his government and of peace.

There will be no end. So here we have two references to the word government. And they're sandwiching those four titles in between. Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

And so what you need to understand from the get-go is that this title is a reference to ruling God's people. Governorship. Reigning.

That's the immediate context. But there's more. If you want to flip in your Bibles to Isaiah chapter 22, I want you to see something. In Isaiah chapter 22, verse 21, you can start in verse 20, there's

this guy named Eliakim.

And he was playing a role in ruling in Judah at this time. And God is speaking to him and speaking what he's going to do with him.

[11:33] And if you notice in verse 21, God describes how he's going to rule over the inhabitants of Jerusalem in Judah. Look here with me.

And he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. So do you know what this means? We have one other place in the book of Isaiah in which rulership of God's people is referenced as being a father.

And so now, maybe things are starting to clarify for you. Isaiah 9 is talking about rulership.

This son coming, this Messiah is going to rule over God's people. And here in Isaiah 22, that father reference is a rather technical word to describe ruling over God's people as well.

Now, if you flip back to Isaiah chapter 9, verse 7, of the increase of his government and of peace, there will be no end.

[12:42] On the throne of David and over his kingdom. On the throne of David, throne. When you think throne, what do you think of? You think king.

King of David, Messiah. The word king is not used in this section, but that's what Isaiah is talking about. The kind of governance that this child, this son is going to exercise is a father-like kingship. So it's not a reference to the first person of the Trinity. It's a reference to the way he's going to reign. Now, I still haven't scratched the itch. Because so far, I have sought to show you that father is being used as a descriptive title for kingship in Isaiah 9, 6.

But we still have to ask a question. Why? Why is father being used to describe kingship?

[14:06] Why? Here's why. Father is a really effective way to communicate the loving heart of this king for his people.

That word father captures the posture of heart of Emmanuel for his people. Biblically speaking, when it comes to a family, a father is described as being the head of the home.

God entrusts the overall welfare of a family to the loving headship of one man. And if he's got any kind of wisdom, he's going to be leveraging his first lady to help him lead.

But what we see happening here is that fatherhood is the exercise of a God-given leadership for the greatest good of every member of his family.

Fathers lead in love. At the heart of this title is a loving reign.

[15:30] The coming king that Isaiah is prophesying of who's already come, he is exercising a reign over his people as a loving father cares for his family.

Now, here's what I am aware of. When I say loving father leading in his home, I'm guessing some of you in this room are like, yeah, I've got a really good picture of that with my dad.

But I also know that there's people in this room that they don't have a good idea of what that means. What does it mean? How does a loving father lead?

A loving father leads by being present in the life of his children. Being there. Not absent.

There. With his children. A loving father leads by protecting his family from danger. For steering his children clear from threats.

[16:39] A loving father leads by providing for his family. Making sure that their every real need is met. A loving father purposes his family.

He aims them at what matters most. Remember Caleb? As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. He's aiming his family.

And then a loving father prepares his family to walk along the path with which he's aimed them. Preparing them to leave home.

Preparing them for marriage. Preparing them for parenting. For a vocation. For college. For dealing with challenging friends and situations. A father, a loving father is preparing his children over and over and over again.

A loving father keeps his promises. A loving father is patient. He endures pain for his kids. You see?

[17:40] Fatherhood is just ripe, full of rich implications for leadership. Fatherhood is leadership. Fatherhood is loving leadership.

And this is really good news for us. Because Jesus, our risen and reigning king, loves us, his people, like a father.

He's present with us right now. I am with you always. He protects us from the schemes of the devil and the wrath to come. He provides for our every need.

Spiritual, physical. He's all wise. He's all powerful. And he exercises that in his love for us. He's purposed us for the kingdom.

Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. And by the way, go make disciples. Bring other people into the kingdom too. He's preparing us for that day when we lay our eyes on him.

[18:51] When faith becomes sight. And that preparing is a lot of purifying. He, our loving king, is sanctifying us.

Because he loves us. He always keeps his promises. And do you want to know how much he loves us? Because this king who took on flesh was crucified for us.

Out of love for us. When you hear that word, father, in this title, don't be thinking the first person of the Trinity.

Be thinking of a king who loves his people like no one else. We've looked at this word, father.

And I hope, I hope that there's this sense that he, in you, that he loves you this way. He's exercising his authority on high out of love for you.

[20:05] Not only is he our father, and it points to his heart of love for us. He is our everlasting father. And this gets at the duration of his reign.

It's secure. Here's what I mean. The Lord Jesus Christ, he took on flesh. He lived a perfect life.

He was crucified on the cross. Dead, buried. He was raised from the grave. He ascended on high.

He's at the right hand of the father. Reigning right now.

He's not going to be voted out of office. There's not going to be a coup that dethrones him. He's not going to get bored with his job and get on the speaking circuit and make a bunch of cash.

He's not building a presidential library. He's building his church. Everlasting reign.

[21:11] Secure. Do you know what's interesting? This past week, I was doing a basic word search on that word everlasting in the Old Testament.

And here's what was interesting. That word everlasting is used to describe some things like everlasting covenant.

God's everlasting promise to his people. It's also used to describe everlasting ruin for those who are wicked and reject him as king.

Everlasting heals the sense of the new creation going on and on. And of course, it's used of God.

From everlasting to everlasting, you are God.

He is our everlasting rock. God's work. What's interesting is that everlasting is never used in the Old Testament to describe someone like us.

Just a normal human being. Never. The only person ever described as being everlasting in the Old Testament is God.

[22:16] Who is eternally existent. From everlasting to everlasting. The beginning and the end. The alpha and the omega. Everlasting Father. The Bible. The first thing. The first thing. The second thing. The first thing.

The second thing. The second thing. Which for our passage makes things pretty interesting.

Because everlasting father. If that's some kind of a job description.

Whoever fills it must be everlasting. And the one who fills it is a child. Is a son.

How can someone born. How can someone born. Be given a title of everlasting father. How does that happen? Because this is Emmanuel.

This is God with us. This is the second person of the Trinity. From everlasting to everlasting incarnate.

[23:13] Who took on human flesh. Who took on human flesh. And just as this son is everlasting in his nature. His loving reign is everlasting.

And it makes his loving reign extremely secure. From this time forth. And forevermore.

Isaiah says in 9-7. Not only is his love sure. His reign is secure.

You see the Lord Jesus Christ. Who was born to us a baby. Who's reigning on high. Is right now personally. Actively. Reigning always for your good.

Out of love for you. Exercising his wisdom. Exercising his power. So that all blessings flow. Resulting in peace.

[24:17] Remember that old Wendy's commercial. With that old lady that would say. Where's the beef? Where's the beef?

Maybe you're sitting in your pew. And you hear me say peace. And you're like. Where's the peace? Where's the peace? Salvati. I'm not seeing it.

I'm seeing the darkness. I'm seeing the gloom. I get the oppression. I see the hostility. Where's the peace?

Where's the peace? Of the everlasting father. If his reign is so loving. Where's the peace? Peace. Well here's what you need to know.

About his reign. His present reign. This has already begun. Yet it hasn't been fully realized yet. His birth.

[25:16] Ushered in this reign. He has come. Merry Christmas. He's reigning on high. But his everlasting reign.

Has not yet been fully realized. He is still to come. He's coming back. The last. The second to the last sentence. Of the book of Revelation. Is Jesus saying.

I'm coming soon. And so now. We live. In between. The first coming. The already. And his second coming.

The not yet. And in between. The already. The not yet. There are varying degrees. Of darkness. Varying degrees. Of gloom. Oppression. And hostility. And we experience it.

Day in. And day out. It's an incomplete. Peace. But here's our assurance.

[26:14] His reign is secure. His love is sure. Jesus is personally. Actively. Exercising. His kingly reign.

Right now. Presence. Protecting. Providing. Purposing. Preparing. Following through on his promises.

So here's what that means. He is our light. In the darkness. He is our gladness.

In the gloom. He is our deliverer. In the midst of oppression. Whether that's internally. Or externally. He's our deliverer. And he is our peace.

In the midst of hostility. And there's going to come a time. You can bank on it. Because this one. Has said so.

[27:12] His word is always true. There's coming a day. When there will be no more darkness. He is going to light up the new Jerusalem.

There's coming a day. When there's going to be no more gloom. Only gladness. Ringing through the halls of the new Jerusalem. There's going to come a time.

When there's no more oppression. You will not feel like. There's a taskmaster on you. And he's going to do that. There are no taskmasters in the new Jerusalem.

And there's no more hostility. No more hostility. No more awkwardness. No more anxiety. No more what ifs or fears. Not between you. Not within yourself.

Not with a lot of the people. And not with the created order. It will be complete and perfect peace. He's going to bring it when he comes with him again. He is reigning over us right now.

[28:16] In love. From this time forth. And forever more. And he's got more coming. His reign is secure.

His love is sure. He is for us now. Now. He's our incarnate king. Brothers and sisters.

Despite the darkness and the gloom. We can be sure. He will never abandon his kingdom. He's never going to leave us or forsake us. He's never going to forfeit his throne.

He will surely bring perfect peace. In complete fullness. When he comes. His reign is secure. It's everlasting. And his love is sure.

Think about it this way. If this king. In his great love for you. Died for you.

[29:15] How much more. Can you be confident. That he is going to bring his kingdom. To full peace filled realization.

As he said he would. You can bank on it. Just two words here. Just two words.

Everlasting father. It's a title. Of Jesus. It's describing his loving reign. His loving everlasting reign. And we're under his reign right now.

If you've responded by faith. To his invitation. To his invitation. To come. Have you? Have you?

Come into his kingdom. Have you bowed your knee. To this great and mighty. And loving king. He is the everlasting father.

[30:18] And he welcomes all. Who are willing to come. These two words. Comprise a message. Of great hope for us.

He's reigning over you today. In love. From this time forth. And forevermore. I told you. When I started. I have good news for you. Of great joy. Good news. Of great joy. Not only was this baby born. This baby is reigning. As everlasting father.

Do you know what that makes me want to do? Joy to the world. The Lord has come. Let earth receive her king.

Joy to the earth. The Savior. Reigns. From this time forth.

[31:17] And forevermore. Lord Jesus. We are so grateful. That you would humble yourself. Taking the form of a baby.

Lying in a manger. Dependent on Mary. All to come. And to save us. To deliver us from the darkness.

To save us from our gloom. To bring. Deliverance to the oppressed. And peace. To those who are experiencing great hostility.

Lord Jesus. We recognize you. As our. Ever living. Incarnate king. Thank you. Would you put comfort and joy.

Into the hearts of my brothers and sisters. And I ask this. In the name of our great king. Amen. Amen. Thank you.