

“The Might of Christmas”      Isaiah 9:2-7    Titus 2:11-14    Luke 2:1-20

The English language has within it many beautiful and meaningful words. Among my favorites are the words used by Isaiah that we have heard tonight, “Unto us a child is born, and he is named, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting, Father, Prince of Peace.” What beauty and hope and glory reside in those words. However, there are also many words that can take on several quite different meanings. The word I want to share with you tonight is the word, “might,” which is a part of Isaiah’s message. We have all used this word, I’m sure. Sometimes we have used it in the sense of power and strength, and at other times we have used it as an indefinite word to mean maybe or perhaps. Listen to this sentence. “I might have enough might to pick up a 50 pound sack of feed.” This sentence shows the word used in the two altogether different meanings.

What got me to thinking about the word might and its different meanings is the way that I have heard the word used when people address God in prayer. I have decided that I am not going to say something like this in prayer: “O God, I pray that you might do so-and-so,” or “Lord, I pray that it might be your will that so-and-so

might get well.” The might of God is not maybe or perhaps. The might of God is absolute love and goodness, which is always directed toward the good of his children.

Tonight through the lessons of Scripture that are always read on Christmas Eve, we have heard again the glad good news of the coming of the Christ child. When Isaiah prophesied about the coming of this child, he did not say, “God might send a child to us one day.” No, Isaiah said that a child is born to us and that his name will be called Wonderful Counselor and Mighty God and Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace. Isaiah was definite; he used no ifs, ands, or buts. There is no maybe or perhaps to the Christmas story. We are gathered here to affirm our faith in the simple truth that God has so loved us and the whole world that he sent his Son to be born into our world to save us and all humanity from the sin that has separated us from God. The might of God is demonstrated in the coming of Jesus Christ, and you and I can know and be assured that God has acted in our behalf, and we can know that the perfect love and the mighty power of God are revealed in this Babe of Bethlehem, even Jesus Christ our Lord.

One more thing about the might of God, and then I’ll hush. God’s mighty power is different from the usual earthly understanding of power. We humans tend to think that power and might are equal to brute force and physical strength. But how did

God choose to show forth his great might? Through the humble Babe that we gather here this evening to worship. In Jesus, God showed for all time that the most powerful force in the universe is the self-giving love of the One who meets the hatreds of the world with outstretched arms and willingly lays down his life for others. Oh, we gather here tonight, Dear God, asking that you will teach us more about your power and might. Help us to know the energizing power of the Christ child who came so humbly but so beautifully. Give us your gift of perfect love so that we can follow this Babe of Bethlehem, who is the Prince of Peace. Let us be filled with the very mind of Christ so that we, too, can know and possess the might of God. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.