

Norman C. Schwab
Yacolt EV Free
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Fore Unto Us

Isaiah 9:6

Some of you play golf. And you know that one of the first things you learn when playing golf is the definition of a very important word. If you are just beginning to play golf it's important to learn the word:"FORE". In the case of your ball being struck in such a way that it does not go where you had previously intended it to go, and said projectile is heading in the general direction of another so as to inflict possible damage to this individual, it is altogether wise and prudent for the beginning golfer who has struck this errant ball to cup his hand to mouth and loudly yell the word FORE! thus alerting the unaware individual that a rather hard, potentially damaging projectile is rapidly heading his way. Now, it is quite beneficial that the speed of sound, your voice, travels faster than the speed of the golf ball, but, in most cases...your voice does not travel fast enough. Such was my fate one day while playing golf at the Pine Crest Golf links on 143rd in Ridgefield.

It was a beautiful day, the sun was shining as I addressed the ball on the tee at the final hole. Those who have played Pinecrest know the final hole is very close to the club house and also very close to the first tee just behind the club house. I had been having such a good round that day..but it was not to continue in the same vein. The plate glass windows of the clubhouse made me a little nervous so I adjusted my stance slightly to the right away from the club house. Those who know golf realize that I have just set myself up to wildly hook the ball...in the direction of the clubhouse. And that is exactly what happened. The second I hit the ball, I knew things had gone bad. All I could do is stand there and watch as my golf ball zoomed toward that big plate glass, yet my spirits were encouraged when the rapidly moving projectile curved around the clubhouse just missing those plate glass windows. I ran into the fairway to ascertain my golf balls ultimate destination,.. just in time to see the hooking ball heading on a line drive towards an older

gentleman addressing his ball on the first tee. Upon recognizing a potential collision by my errant projectile, I quickly employed use of the word FORE!. Now as I said, the speed of sound is usually faster than the speed of a golf ball, but...not when the ball gets such a large head start. It does little good to yell FORE! when the line drive shot is only 20 feet from the point of impact. The point of impact happened to be the older gentleman's leg on the first tee. He was not pleased with my shot and in between clutching his thigh and jumping on one leg in a circle, he made his displeasure quite clear to me through certain sign language gestures, punctuated with short verbal phrases. Apologizing profusely I took my time in recovering my ball which, luckily for me had bounced off the mans leg and back towards the direction of the final cup.

This morning God's Word is giving us plenty of warning. Danger! Watch out! There is coming toward us a rapid projectile of God's judgment for the sin we have embraced. Some of us are still walking about in darkness, stumbling in our sin and heading everywhere but in the direction of the Light, the Truth. God shouts out to us this morning, FORE! Wake up! Watch out! . Some may not even realize that they are at risk of spending an eternity without God, without family, without joy. Without love. Without peace. How long will we continue to stumble in darkness? How long are we going to wait before we respond to the warning? Perhaps some of us need to be yelling FORE.

God didn't wait. God didn't put off his warning, He let folks know hundreds of years before danger was coming. God also let folks know that there was a Deliverer coming. God prompted his servant Isaiah yell FORE over seven hundred years before the Deliverer came. That warning and message of hope continues to sound out its message even to us today. God crafted a plan where we not only could sidestep the torment of hell, but step out of the darkness and into life. God's plan centered around a baby. A helpless innocent baby. His announcement and warning came piercing the darkness FORE! unto us a child is born. Unto us a son is given. FORE! unto us.

Turn with me in your Bibles to Isaiah chapter 9. Times were difficult in Isaiah's day. Armies all around were threatening to attack. The Assyrians were threatening to run over their country. Food was scarce. There was fear and darkness and danger all around. One would

think such danger would drive people to run to God for answers and help and deliverance, but they did not. What disturbed Isaiah was that the chosen people of God were turning to the dark things of this world for answers. They were looking to spiritualist and mediums in séances calling up the dead ancestors for help in 8:19. Verse 22 they looked to the earth for answers chapter 8 verse 22. Their fate for consulting the dead was that they would be forced to join the dead in darkness and ignorance.

It was a gloomy dark time 9:1, 9:2 the people were walking in darkness. If you have ever gone on a midnight walk, when the moon is out its not too bad. The shadows might be a little scary but you can see the path. But as soon as you begin to walk under the cover of the tall thick trees and the moon goes behind the clouds...it gets dark. Your step slows. Your eyes grow bigger straining to see. The adrenalin starts to flow. Until you whip out your flashlight. The beam of light illumines the way. You can see what your feet are stepping on. You can see the potential tripping hazards. Light increases your pace. Light builds your confidence. Light relaxes and rests and you begin again to enjoy your journey. Light devours the gloom of darkness. God says that is what He has done for us when He sent His son Jesus, a little package of hope to the world.

It's always deepens the truths of a song when I hear about the history behind it. The song, "I heard the bells on Christmas day" was based a poem written by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow during the American civil war. He wrote this on Christmas day 1863. In the past 6 months the bloody battles of Vicksburg and Gettysburg had been fought. It was not a peaceful time in America. Brother fighting against brother. Tens of thousands had lost their lives, their husbands, sons. Yet he wrote the first line. "I heard the bells on Christmas day, their old familiar carols play and wild and sweet the words repeat of peace of earth goodwill to men." He must have thought "how could that be possibly true during a time like this? And so he continued to write describing the reality of his feelings, "and in despair I bowed my head: There is no peace on earth I said, For hate is strong and mocks the song of peace on earth, goodwill to men." We look at our own world 150 years later with wars in Iraq, and Afghanistan and Somalia, Africa. All over the world there is war

and darkness and fighting and gloom. Little has changed. There is war and fighting between countries. There is war and fighting in our homes between family members. Yet in those dark streets shineth an everlasting light...a light of hope.

In chapter nine verse one...it says BUT...there will be no more gloom...verse 2 the people who walk in darkness will see a great light! Those who live in a dark land the light will shine on them. Where is this dark land that the light of the world will shine brightly? End of verse 1 Galilee. Where did Jesus spend much of earthly ministry? Galilee. Lowly, dark, Galilee. 700 years before Jesus was born, God told Isaiah part of his plan. He told Isaiah to yell FORE! Watch out it's coming. And look closely for a Deliverer who would come out of Gallilee! FORE unto us! FORE! v. 2 Freedom from darkness is coming. FORE v.4 freedom from oppression by your enemy can be had.

Lets read verse 6. (READ) FORE! There is a leader who will come and lead to the light. He Himself will be the light of life. This morning I want to talk about that leader who will triumphantly lead us out of doom out of darkness and into a most marvelous light. I want to talk about his humanity and deity all wrapped up together in an amazing gift of deliverance. I want to encourage us to see the One who is Hope and challenge us to walk in His light.

A Child is born:

I think we have covered the word "for" in verse 6. Isaiah uses that word to alert us that he is now going to tells us about the Person behind the deliverance. He is going to amplify the attributes of the one who will lead us out of our darkened minds. "For unto us a child is born." A child is born? Is this our Mighty Deliverer? Remember the sign in chapter Isaiah 7:14. "The Lord himself will give you a sign; a virgin will be with child and will call His name Immanuel." His name Immanuel means "God with us", that means God has promised He will be with the people of Judah during tough, gloomy times. It means that no matter how hard the circumstance are that you face right now. God is with you.

This child in Isaiah 9 is no longer the sign but the Deliverer himself. Born to a human. Born to a woman. God's plan was that this

deliverer be fully human. He was born into the covenant people of God. Born into the nation of Israel. A fulfillment of the agreement that God had made with Abraham and David. God would multiply and bless them. God made a covenant that David's throne would reign in righteousness forever. God knew what He was doing when He wrapped His son in the guise of humanity coming to earth as a child.

A child is born. Humans are born. This speaks of the humanity of this deliverer. Jesus came and was fully human. He knows exactly how we feel. He can not only sympathized with us He can empathize. He been there. He has experienced the same temptations we do. Luke 2:52 "He grew in stature and favor with God and man." He has experienced the same normal physical, mental, social and spiritual growth that we do. He started out just like we did...as a baby born to a woman. He can identify with our pain, hunger, thirst, fatigue, our flew and colds. He has experienced pleasure and rest and relaxation. For unto us a child is born.

A Son is given:

Unto us a son is given. While a child is born speaks of His humanity, a son is given speaks of His deity. A son was given. Jesus Christ the son of God was given. Jesus did not just begin his existence 2000 years ago in Bethlehem. He has been always the son of God existing as a part of the God head from all eternity. In Micah 5:2 it says "His goings forth are from long ago from the days of eternity." John 1:1-3 "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." Jesus has been around for eternity. He is fully God and at the same time fully human.

This concept can be mind-boggling. There have been many attempts to bring this concept into our realm of understanding but it's beyond the grasp of our finite wisdom. Spurgeon says its similar to a gnat attempting to drink dry all the water in the ocean. It's tough to understand, a mystery...yet...a God whom we could fully understand would in fact be no God at all. And here is God in the person of Jesus Christ who fully understand us. Fully human and fully God. A child was born...but a son was given.

Unto us:

Unto us a son is given. Unto us. Unto us. A son was given unto us as a gift. Have you received that gift? Have you received the son unto you? Have you taken the son into yourself? Has the Son gotten past the exterior skin and down into your flesh and bones and heart and soul. Have you taken the Son unto you? Has the ultimate gift from God moved on into your life and so changed you? Have you taken the Son...unto you? Many people even when they are shown the Light, are even handed the gift of the Son, the Deliverer politely decline. No thanks. Other people may need such a crutch, but not me. Why? V.9 "...asserting in pride and in arrogance of heart. The bricks have fallen down, but we will rebuild with smooth stones. The sycamores have been cut down, but we will replace them with cedars." So many people reject the Messiah, the Deliverer because in their darkness they say "I can beat this one on my own." In their pride and arrogance they say, "I will just work harder. I don't need any Savior. I will be my own Savior." Sure the walls of my life have been knocked out, but I will rebuild it just fine on my own thank you. Sure someone has come along and cut down all the living, fruitful trees in my life, but I will simply replant and grow stronger and better trees on my own. I don't need a Savior.

Perhaps this morning His light will pierce your darkness for the first time and you will see the child as your Deliverer. Look at the qualities of the One who says, "trust me to be your Deliverer". V.6 "The government will be on His shoulders." He will rule over God's people. He wants to be the leader of your life and light your way. His name is called Wonderful. He is exceptional and distinctive above all others. He is called Counselor. People will gladly listen to and follow the counsel He gives. People will be anxious to hear him teach the truth of God's ways. If you are still resisting the counsel of the Savior. If you are politely refusing the wisdom of God's light. I want to ask you this morning. How is your current guidance system working for you? Do you find yourself bumping and crashing and falling into things while you continue to walk in the darkness? Perhaps then it is time for a wonderful Counselor. Perhaps it is time for a new guidance system. We can only follow one guidance

system at a time. Competing guidance systems can cause all sorts of confusion and problems.

One of the worst train disasters in history occurred in El Toro tunnel near Leon, Spain on January 3, 1944. Over 500 people died. The train was one of those long passenger trains with an engine on the front and the back. On January 3rd the train went into the tunnel and the front engine stalled. So the engineer on the back started up his engine to back the train out of the tunnel. Just about that time the front engineer managed to get his engine going again and attempted to pull the train forward through the tunnel. Neither the front or back had any way to communicate with each other. They both assumed the reason they weren't moving was because they needed more power. They continued to pull against each other for several minutes filling the tunnel with exhaust fumes and killing hundreds of people with carbon-monoxide fumes...all because the trains had one too many engineers.

Jesus said the same thing in Matthew 6 "No one can serve two masters." You can only commit to one at a time. Perhaps this Christmas 2007 is where you follow what it says in Proverbs 3:5-6 "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths." So how is your current guidance system working? The Messiah is the wonderful counselor. He is the mighty God and Everlasting Father. He is the prince of peace. He will one day bring peace to the entire world and quiet the wars and strife. He wants to bring peace to your own heart right now.

Unto us is given. Have you received the son? Receiving the Son unto you is much more than you cleaning up the outside. It's much more than conforming to a list of good behaviors. It involves cleaning up the inner man. It does little good to scrub up the outside of your garbage can without emptying the contents on the inside. It may look clean from the outside...but if you get close you can still smell the stench coming from the inside. If the Son has come unto you...our hearts can no longer be a collector of death and the worlds scum. Has the child been born unto you? Have you received the Son?

Lets bow our heads in prayer towards God. Maybe you are one who has already received the Son into your heart. That's where we all start...but maybe God is pulling you to warn others that haven't received

him yet. Maybe they've heard the story but it's never quiet sunk in. Maybe God wants to use you this next week to yell FORE to someone who is heading to doom and desperately need Jesus. If there is someone on your mind whom you know God is pulling for you to tell. Your going to need an opportunity want to pray for you this week. If you would like prayer for boldness, an opportunity, a person to share slip you hand up and I'll pray for you this week.

Maybe you have not yet made a choice to receive the Son, received Jesus unto you. You need a different guidance system. Perhaps arrogance and hard-headedness has kept you at arms length from God for far too long. You know that you are a sinner and nothing you have tried can wipe out those sins and restore your relationship with God. You need Jesus the deliver to save. He's promised to come unto you if you'll just let him. Let him in. Slip up your hand if you are ready to let him in. I want to pray with you and encourage your relationship with God.

Fore unto us a child is born...unto us a Son is given.