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# WONDERFUL COUNSELOR

— 2018 Advent Devotional —

Awana®

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, Prince of Peace.

— Isaiah 9:6, ESV —

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**I** am writing today from Vietnam. This country is beautiful. Tropical. Abounding in sunshine and scenery that catches your breath. But my time here has also been very sobering.

My team and I visited the War Museum in Ho Chi Minh City. There, woven through the war machines—the downed US planes, tanks, and transports—is the story of war. Room after room depicts torture methods used on prisoners and dead bodies decimated by Agent Orange and bombs. Propaganda posters cry out for blood and victory.

We visited Cu Chi where three stories of tunnels run underground on land pocked by deep bomb craters. The tropical jungle was so thick you could hear a squirrel moving, but your eyes could not spot it even though you knew it was nearby.

Here again were reminders of man's inhumanity to man. We were shown invisible booby traps that when stepped on dropped men to their deaths on floors spiked with three foot impalement spears, spaced strategically for optimum damage and death.

After only three days our sickened souls were crying out for relief.

My team and I were experiencing the condition of the hopeless world. Can you imagine what it was like before Jesus was born? Before our Savior came, a sin-sick world, unable to stop the madness of cruelty and barbaric practices, cried out for Him. Human history is a war museum waiting to display your body or your child's body as a trophy, a victory prize in the seemingly unending story of human cruelty.

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Made in the image of God, we failed utterly to live up to the *imago dei*. Without His Spirit breathing life into us, we become nothing short of animals. We should never forget that truth, because Jesus' coming changed everything.

When Isaiah prophesied Jesus' coming into our darkness, 700 years before Jesus' birth, it must have sounded too wonderful.

*The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned ...*

*For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called*

Wonderful Counselor  
Mighty God  
Everlasting Father  
Prince of Peace

Wonderful Counselor. This prophecy perfectly described Jesus, who would subject Himself to an unbelievably cruel death on a cross in order to lift us from our sins and the sins committed against us.

Wonderful Counselor. Jesus' impact on the world would be too wonderful to even imagine, simply awesome. In His name, care and love would characterize His formerly sin-driven, capable-of-every-cruelty followers. Schools and hospitals would be built to bring light to those who still walk in darkness today. Starvation and disease would be addressed in His name. Because of Jesus wells are built, medicines are supplied, hands are held, and hope permeates every human circumstance.

Wonderful Counselor. Show us how to live. Help us follow you closely in our sin-sick world.

Wonderful Counselor. Shine Your light in the darkness and begin with the darkness in me.

Wonderful Counselor. You are awesome.

Wonderful Counselor. You are our hope.

Wonderful Counselor. What seems too good to be true is found in You.



## Made in the image of God, we failed utterly to live up to the *imago dei*.



The world's last chapter is not its wars or museums to human depravity. The world's last chapter is still being written. It begins and ends with Jesus, with a whole lot of awesome written on the pages because of Him.

Wonderful, awesome, beyond description Counselor, light-in-the-darkness Jesus.

We love you.

Valerie Bell  
CEO of Awana



### Questions for You:

- In what ways are you living in darkness today? What seems just too horrible, too cruel, yet too true?
- How have you seen Jesus be a wonderful counselor in your life or the world?

### Questions for Kids:

- When have you encountered something "wonderful?"
- In what ways is Jesus wonderful?
- How did Jesus' coming change the world?