

The Festival of the Presentation of our Lord and the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Candlemas)  
St. Luke 2:22-32  
February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021  
Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

## A Light to Bring Revelation to the Gentiles

*In Nomine Iesu!*

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

### **Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:**

Almighty and Everlasting God, we beseech Thee, grant that we may know and praise Thy dear Son, even as Simeon of old, taking Him in his arms, spiritually knew and with his lips confessed Him, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one true God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Today we come to the official end of the Christmas cycle. The theme for the season of Christmas—these forty days from our Lord's birth to His presentation in the temple—is that our Lord + Jesus reveals Himself to the Light of the world. During the twelve days of Christmas, our Lord + Jesus revealed Himself to be the Savior of the world to the Jews. Angels sang of His birth. Shepherds heard the heralded announcement from the angels, and leaving their flocks in the night went to Bethlehem and found our Lord and Savior wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger. They then went into the surrounding region and told all that they found the events of that night. The Blessed Virgin Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.

During the Epiphany season our Lord + Jesus was revealed as the Savior of not just the Jews, but the Gentiles, too. He is truly the Savior of the world. He is the Light of the whole world. Magi came from the East and worshiped Him, bending the knee and presenting Him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Our Lord was made manifest as the Light of the world when He performed His first miracle at the wedding in Cana of Galilee. His Apostles saw the miracle He did and they believed on Him. He was revealed as the Light of the world when He was transfigured on the mountain of transfiguration when He brought Sts. Peter, James and John with Him and Moses and Elijah appeared before them all conversing with our Lord + Jesus. On that day His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as light. He revealed His full glory. He revealed that He truly was the Light come into this world filled with the darkness of sin, to be the Light that reveals our salvation in Him alone.

Now we come to the day forty days after our Lord's birth, when according to the Law of Moses—which is the Law of the Lord God—all firstborn males are holy to the Lord God. All male babies who open the womb are holy to the Lord God, that is, they belong to the Lord God. The parents of the male child could redeem the baby back from the Lord God by offering up a sacrifice. The sacrifice offered was based upon the wealth of the parents. The poorest of Israelites would offer as a sacrifice "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons." That this is the offering presented by the Baby + Jesus' parents reveals that they do not come from wealth. The Blessed Virgin Mary was a poor handmaiden and St. Joseph was a poor carpenter.

But in spite of their poverty, they still performed the fulfillment of the Law of God. This reveals

their faithfulness. As St. Matthew wrote at the beginning of His Gospel that St. Joseph was a righteous and just man. He knew the Scriptures and obeyed them. He lived His life according to them. So, did his wife Mary. They would bring the Lord + Jesus up in a Christian home; a home that studied the Scriptures, prayed to the Lord God on a regular basis, and lived their lives according the Ten Commandments to the best of their ability, confessing their sins whenever they broke the Law of God, either intentionally or unintentionally.

The Word of God reveals our sinfulness and need for a Savior. It reveals that there is no salvation in our own works. Here today we are presented with the living Word coming into the temple. The Light of the world comes into His temple. The true Temple comes into the temple made with man's hands. Simeon takes the Baby + Jesus into his arms and prophesies that this Child would be the Light to enlighten the Gentiles, and be the glory of His people Israel. This Child was the Light of the whole world. He is the Savior of all mankind.

The Gospel is illumined in all the world by the works of the Christ. The whole world knows that the Lord + Jesus is the Savior of the world by His works and merits. That the One Who would offer up the once and for all time sacrifice for the sins of the whole world; that the One Who would atone for the sins of the whole world with His perfect, innocent and holy sacrifice on the tree of the holy cross is now in the place where sacrifices for sin were performed daily is significant. The sacrifices of animals could not atone for the sins of the whole world. The blood of bulls and goats were a poor sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. They were only a shadow and image of the true sacrifice of sins found in the sacrifice of our Lord + Jesus.

The sacrifice that our Lord + Jesus makes happens in the dark. The sun was darkened from the sixth to the ninth hours; when the sun is supposed to be at its brightest. Nature revealed the condition of this world; that this world is surrounded and stuck in darkness. This world is filled with darkness on account of sin existing in this world. Our souls are darkened because of sin dwelling within us. This darkness in us is revealed with every hateful, angry, jealous, spiteful thought, word and deed that we do, say or think. The darkness of sin is revealed in us every time we neglect prayer and study of the Lord God's Word. Every time we put our trust in someone or something other than the Lord God the darkness that corrupts our souls is revealed. Every time we mistreat our neighbor, or neglect his care, we reveal that the darkness of sin dwells within us. It reveals that we stand in darkness and have no way out of it without a Light.

The Light that illumines our dark souls is the Christ. Our Lord + Jesus is the Light of the world. He is our Light and Salvation. For He suffered and died in darkness on the tree of the holy cross to pay the penalty for all the darkness that corrupts our souls. In our sin, we destroyed the image of the Lord God in which we were created. By offering up His Body as a sacrifice for us, He restores that image to us through faith. When we cling in faith to His sacrifice—to His atonement for us—the darkness in us is removed and we are filled with His everlasting Light.

The darkness in us is covered over with His Light. His Light overshadows all the darkness that corrupts us, so that no darkness remains to be seen. Only the Light that comes from Him is shown in us. Through faith we obtain this great treasure. We cling in faith to the works and merits of the Christ, for we know that in Him is Light and Salvation. In faith we know that the Lord + Jesus is the once and for all time sacrifice that atones for our sins and the sins of the whole world. Through faith we gladly study the Scriptures and pray every day to the One Who removes the darkness from us and fills us with His light. Through faith we gladly come to this holy house and receive from our Lord and Savior His good gifts that fill us with forgiveness, life and salvation. Through faith we gladly strive daily to live Christian lives, just like St. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin Mary did.

For, our Lord + Jesus Christ is the Light of the world. He is the Light that enlightens the Gentiles,

and is the glory of His people Israel, for in Him all sacrifices are accomplished so that we no longer need to bring our offerings to the temple made with man's hands. For in Him we find the true Temple in which all sacrifices have been fulfilled. Therefore, my dear friends, we can take Him up into our arms, just like Simeon did on this day in the temple, and give thanks to the Lord God for giving us a true means for our salvation. We take Him up into our arms whenever we read and hear the Gospel, whenever we remember our Holy Baptism, or whenever we come to this holy altar and receive from Him His Body and Blood given in bread and wine. We take up our Lord + Jesus, the Christ, into our arms whenever we confess our sins to Him in Confession.

Through His gifts He removes the darkness that plagues our souls and fills it with His Light. The Holy Ghost continually works through these means to bring us into His eternal Kingdom filled with light. For He gifts us with faith to cling to the Light that enlightens the Gentiles and reveals to us that He is the One and Only sacrifice necessary for all our sins. Let us give Him thanks and praise that He has removed the darkness of sin from us and filled us with His everlasting light. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

Lord God, heavenly Father, Who hast given Thy Son to be our Savior, a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel, we beseech Thee, enlighten our hearts, that we may know Thy grace and fatherly will in Him toward us, and obtain everlasting life; through the same Thy Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

**The Votum:**

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*