

The Festival of the Circumcision and Name of Jesus
St. Luke 2:21
January 1st, 2026
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald Dulas

Before He Was Conceived

In Nomine Iesu!

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

Sermon Text:

“And when eight days were fulfilled for circumcising Him, His Name was called + JESUS, which was so called by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.”

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

O Lord, send out Thy Light and Thy Truth, let them lead us. O Lord, open Thou my lips, that my mouth may show forth Thy praise. O Lord, graciously preserve me, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected. Amen.

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

My dear friends, outside of the record of His birth, we are not told much about our Lord's childhood. Only three events of His youth are recorded for us, and all of them are in the Evangelist St. Luke. Two of those events happened when He was still an infant. All of them are recorded in the second chapter of St. Luke's Gospel in succession. He was circumcised. He was presented at the temple, which we heard about this past Sunday, and will hear again on the fortieth day after the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord, on February 2nd. The third event we will hear about on the First Sunday after the Festival of the Epiphany of our Lord, as we do every year. When our Lord + Jesus is once again in the temple both asking questions, and providing answers, to the religious doctors in the temple. This is all we hear about our Lord's childhood. Just three historical events.

Today, we hear about the first of those events after His birth: His circumcision and naming. It is fitting that we hear about this great event on the eighth day after Christmas; after His birth. For we are celebrating this event in the same time frame as the historical events took place. He was born into our flesh last week. Now, today, He is circumcised. From His birth to His circumcision today is the same amount of time that His parents had to wait for Him to be circumcised. This is also the day when He received His Name. Although, as we know from the Gospels of both St. Luke, and St. Matthew, the Apostle and Evangelist, our Lord had already been given a Name. We learned His Name from the angel Gabriel. Both the Blessed Virgin Mary, and St. Joseph, were told what to Name Him before He was born. St. Mary was even told what to Name Him before He was even conceived in the womb.

His Name was to be called + JESUS. The Evangelist St. Luke tells us that this Name was picked out and determined before the Blessed Virgin Mary conceived in her womb. And I would dare say that His Name was determined before the foundations of the world were laid. For, we all know what His Name means: it means “Savior.” Our Lord + JESUS, the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and born of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Who is both God and Man, is born in our flesh to be our Savior. Our Savior from what? He is our Savior from sin and death. Our Lord God before the foundations of the world were laid had already determined that His creation would need a Savior. Our Lord God had already

determined before He began to make and create the world, that He would be born in our flesh; that the Second Person of the Holy Trinity would save mankind by becoming mankind, in order that He might fulfill what we are unable to, and that He would also bear our punishment on His own body. He would be our Savior from sin and death. He planned this before the foundations of the whole world were laid.

This is why His Name was determined before He was conceived in His mother's womb. His Name would be + JESUS, for He would save His people from their sins. We cannot save ourselves by our own works and merits. They are as filthy rags before the Lord, as we heard from the Prophet Isaiah. Even our righteous acts, our so called "good works," are as filthy rags before our Lord God. Therefore, how can we even begin to place our hope in them. Certainly, we should do, and continue to do, good works, because we have been made a new creation through the waters of Holy Baptism. Obeying the Law of God, the Ten Commandments, is what those who have put on the righteousness of the Christ through Holy Baptism do. We naturally do good works, through the faith implanted in us by the Holy Ghost. He works the good works in us. He the One Who makes our works worthy before the Lord God, because the works of our Lord + Jesus are now credited to us.

But we should never rely upon our good deeds as the reason for our salvation. If we trust in our good works, we exclude our One, True Savior. If we put our faith and hope in what we do, we exclude the Christ. Our faith and trust should be in the One Who determined before the foundation of the world, to do all things necessary for our salvation. Our Lord is named + JESUS, for this very reason. He is called "Savior" because He is our Savior. He is our Savior from sin and death. He took upon Himself our flesh, He came down from Heaven, to be our Savior from sin and death, because we could in no wise save ourselves from our own transgressions.

He came as the sinless Son of God. He took upon Himself our flesh, but He did not take upon Himself our sinful flesh. We inherited our sinful flesh from Adam. It has been handed down from generation to generation. Sin inheres in our flesh. We cannot shake it from us. Even if we were somehow able to perfectly keep the Law of the Lord God, we would still be held accountable for the original sin of Adam that clings to our flesh. This is not an issue for the Lord + Jesus. For He is born in our flesh, but without sin. He already worked this miracle in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He was conceived and born in our flesh but without sin. This is why He bears the Name above all names. This is why on this eighth day after His birth in our flesh, He is given the Name by which He was so called before He was conceived in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He was called + JESUS. He was called "Savior." For He would save His people from their sins.

He has indeed saved us from our sins. He has fulfilled all for which He came into this world to do. Before He was able to accomplish those things required by the Law of God, before He was physically able to perform them Himself, His parents, Sts. Joseph and Mary, did for Him all things required by the Law of the Lord God. This past Sunday we heard that He was presented in the temple, a sacrifice of two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, was made on His behalf, for all male children, who opened the womb, were called holy to the Lord. Our Lord + Jesus was only forty days old, and not able to accomplish this on His own. His parents helped Him fulfill the Law, because they were righteous and devout.

We see the same thing today, on this eighth day after Christmas, on this octave of the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. The parents of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ, have Him circumcised according to the Law of Moses. He also given the Name of + JESUS. He is given the Name of "Savior" for He has saved His people from their sins. The Law of God, given through Moses, is fulfilled by His loving and devout parents. Only eight days after His birth, our Lord + Jesus is already beginning to fulfill all things necessary for our salvation. Already on this eighth day of His earthly life, our Lord + Jesus is accomplishing our salvation.

Only three events are recorded regarding our Lord's childhood, and they are big events. This is why we hear about them every year. And in the case of His circumcision, and His presentation at the temple, we hear about those events in the time frame that they happened for Him after His birth in our flesh. Therefore, today, our Lord + Jesus, the Christ, begins His sacrificial work of redeeming us from sin, death, and the power of the devil. This is the day when He begins to fulfill all things necessary for the fulfillment of the Law of the Lord God. He circumcised on the eighth day, according to the Law of Moses. Indeed, this act of circumcision was first entrusted to Abraham, and to Isaac, and to Jacob, the Patriarchs. For Abraham believed the promises of the Lord God, and it was credited to him as righteousness. St. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin Mary also believed the promises of the Lord God, and had their firstborn Son circumcised on the eighth day, and gave Him the Name told them by the angel Gabriel. He is called + JESUS, for He is the Savior from sin and death for all mankind, especially for those who cling to Him in faith; who believe that from Him is redemption from all our sins.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us this day rejoice that our Lord + Jesus, the Savior, *our* Savior, has fulfilled all things necessary for our salvation. Let us cling in faith to Him and His works, for they are perfect works which perfectly fulfill the requirements of the Law. By faith He imputes His righteousness to us. Through Holy Baptism, the rite that circumcision pointed to, we are now clothed with the righteousness of our Lord + Jesus. We are clothed with the Savior's righteousness. For we have been baptized into His Name. We bear His Name. We are His, and He is ours. Therefore, we will be saved from hell and Satan when our Lord + Jesus calls us out of this vale of tears to our eternal home in Heaven. This is why we can rejoice this day, not just because it is the new year, or because it is the octave of the Feast of our Lord's Nativity, but because we have been saved from our sins, and have been gifted with eternal life in Heaven. Thanks be to God! In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord + Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same + Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with the 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!