

The Wednesday of Ember Week in Advent  
St. Luke 1:26-38  
December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

## The Son of God

*In Nomine Iesu!*

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

### **Sermon Text:**

“And the angel answered and said unto her, ‘The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God.’”

### **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, with the advent of Gaudete Sunday, and the coming of Ember Week, the Church turns its focus upon the One Who comes to redeem His people from sin and death. Our focus turns to our Lord’s incarnation in our flesh. This is the true reason for the season of Christmas. The phrase + “Jesus is the reason for the season” is only partially correct. It is only partially correct because it does not explain why the Lord + Jesus is the reason for the season. Many imagine that it simply refers to the man + Jesus of Nazareth. If they even bother mentioning that He is the Savior, or Lord, they leave out why He is Savior, or Lord. Even referring to our Lord + Jesus as the Redeemer, only tells a part of the story. This is why one should avoid bumper sticker, or t-shirt, theology; the short catchphrases that people seem to be so fond of these days. They should be avoided because they do not tell the full story, and can lead to misunderstandings about our Lord.

The angel Gabriel, in today’s Gospel reading from the Evangelist St. Luke, tells the Blessed Virgin Mary why our Lord + Jesus is the reason for the season of Christmas. It is because He is the Holy One begotten of the Lord God. He is the Son of God. To state it simply, we celebrate Christmas because our Lord God has become a man. The Son of God will now be a Son of Man born of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is why when we confess the Creed we genuflect, or bow, at the words “and was made man.” We could have no salvation if the Son of God does not become the Son of Man. We could have no redemption from sin and death if our Lord + Jesus does take upon Himself our flesh, and become man. He must fulfill the Law as a man. He must suffer and die as a man. The Lord God must accomplish our salvation for us, as a man, because we are unable to do it ourselves.

This is, therefore, the true meaning of Christmas. We do not, as the world does, celebrate Christmas because of Santas, reindeer, and elves. We do not celebrate Christmas because of presents, decorations, Christmas trees. We do not celebrate Christmas because of family gatherings, holiday meals, and Christmas cookies. All those things may add to the celebration, but they are not the reason for the season. Even focus on the birth of the Lord + Jesus as a baby is not the main reason for the

celebration of Christmas. Too many people forsake the true reason for these periphery things. Focusing on the birth of the baby + Jesus means nothing if it is just a story about one more Jewish boy being born. We are not celebrating the birthday of the Lord + Jesus as if He is getting another year older, and therefore, we need to sing "Happy Birthday" to Him, and bake Him a cake. Christmas is not a birthday party for + Jesus.

The angel Gabriel tells us the reason for the season of Christmas. The Lord God will become man. The Lord God will dwell with man as a man. This is why He is called "Emmanuel." He is "God with us." The Baby that is to be born to the Blessed Virgin Mary will be called the Son of God. He will be called holy. He is unlike any other Jewish baby born. He is unlike any other human baby born. We are all conceived and born in sin. We have inherited our sin from our first parents Adam and Eve. We have conceived in corruption, and sin inheres in us so that we are unable to rescue ourselves from it. The Lord + Jesus, the Baby to be born to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Baby whose birth the angel Gabriel is announcing will be born without sin. This is why He alone can truly be called holy.

To be holy means to be without sin. It means to be set apart from the depravity of sin and death. The birth of our Lord means so much more than this world, or even the majority of the Christian Church acknowledges at this time of the year. The Lord God has come down from Heaven to be one of us. He comes to be the holy One in our midst. He comes to be free from sin, so that by His innocent suffering and death, the penalty of sin may be paid for in full.

And because He is holy, because He is the Son of God, Who became a Son of Man, by His fulfilling of the Law, and His ransom for us on the tree of the holy cross, we too are made holy. We are made holy through the means of grace. By Baptism, the preaching of the Gospel, the Holy Communion, and the Absolution, we are declared righteous and holy for the sake of the Christ through faith. When we believe that by these gifts, we are declared righteous, we are indeed made righteous.

Can you see how much information is lacking when we simply say + "Jesus is the reason for the season"? Such a statement leaves out the incarnation. Whether that is on purpose, or not, is for you to decide. When someone denies that the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper can be the Body and Blood of the Christ, that the Lord + Jesus, the Christ, is truly and substantially present, in, with, and under the bread and wine, how can that person believe that the Lord + Jesus is both the Lord God and man. For if the Lord + Jesus can be both God and man, He can be present in, with, and under the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper. To deny the sacramental presence of our Lord in the Holy Communion is to deny the incarnation itself. This is perhaps why the majority of Christianity ignores the incarnational birth of our Lord during this season.

The devil, the world, and our flesh do not want us to hallow the Lord + Jesus as the Son of God come into the world to redeem mankind from their sins and trespasses. They do not want us to focus on the fact that the Lord God is dwelling among His people. This is why we are drawn away from a celebration of the incarnation of the Lord God by all the external trappings of this season of Christmas. The celebration of Christmas has always been a church Service. This is why it is called Christ's Mass, because we come to receive the Mass, that is, the Lord's Supper, on this most holy of days. If you are not in church on Christ's Mass, you are not celebrating Christmas. For the celebration of our Lord's incarnation, of the Lord + Jesus, the Second Person of the Trinity becoming man and dwelling among us, finds its fulfillment in the bread and wine being the Body and Blood of our Lord + Jesus.

He came to win forgiveness of sins for us by being the holy Son of God Who ransomed us from sin and death by His own death upon the tree of the holy cross. He imparts that forgiveness to us by giving us His very Body and Blood in bread and wine. When we believe that in receiving the bread and the wine we are receiving the forgiveness of sins, we truly receive forgiveness. For His Body and His Blood have been given and shed for us poor, miserable sinners so that we might have forgiveness of

our sins.

This is why our Lord + Jesus comes to this earth. This is why in the sixth month of the pregnancy of Elisabeth with St. John the Baptist, the angel Gabriel was sent to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house and lineage of King David. He comes to announce to the Blessed Virgin that she will now bear the Son of God in her womb. God will become man in her womb. Truly a remarkable thing! For the Most Holy Place in the temple was the place where the Lord God made His dwelling prior to this. His throne was the Ark of the Covenant. This was the Mercy Seat, the seat where the Lord's mercy was to be found.

The sacrifices took place outside the temple, but in front of where the Lord God made His dwelling. Now, not only does the Lord God take upon Himself our flesh, so that we may be with Him in His person, and He may be with us without any veil or barrier between us. Now He dwells bodily in the womb of the Blessed Virgin. Truly the Lord + Jesus is God with us. The Lord God now dwells with His people because He so wills it. He desires to be with us as one of us. Therefore, let every knee bow at the words "and was made man" when we confess the Creed. For our Lord and Savior, our Redeemer, dwells with us in order to save and redeem us.

This, my friends, is the reason why we celebrate Christmas. It is the reason for the season. The Lord God has become a man, He is holy and is the Son of God, and His Name is + Jesus, which means "Savior." The Lord God has become man so that He might fulfill the Law perfectly for us, and offer up His life as a ransom for us upon the tree of the holy cross. Let us therefore celebrate this approaching Feast with great solemnity, for our God deigns to dwell with us, so that we may dwell with Him in Heaven for all eternity. 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!*