

The Festival of the Circumcision and Name of Jesus  
St. Luke 2:21  
January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025  
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

His Name

*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, many sermons these days focus on the first shedding of blood by our Lord + Jesus on this day of His circumcision. But in reality, in circumcision there is not much shedding of blood. To draw blood during a circumcision was considered really bad form. That is why the focus of today is not on our Lord's first shedding of blood, but on our Lord's placing Himself under the Law of God. The Law that He established, that He wrote on men's hearts at creation; the Law that He wrote with His own hand on Mount Sinai and gave to Moses; the Law that was given to the people of Israel as a testament that He was their God and they were His people; this Law is what our Lord + Jesus places Himself under.

He does not just give the Law and expects mankind to fumble their way through life trying to keep it. He does just give the Law to us and watch us fail time and again to keep the Law. No, my dear friends, our Lord + Jesus, the Christ, He Who is both fully the Lord God and fully Man places Himself under the same Law under which we are placed. He subjects Himself to the Law under which we are also subject. Our first parents, Adam and Eve, were the first to be subject to the Law of God. We remember how that went. Eve was deceived by the serpent and ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. She gave to her husband, who was with her the whole time she was being beguiled by the serpent and did not say anything, and he also ate of the tree of which it was forbidden.

Adam and Eve had only one Law that was spoken by the Lord God. Do not eat from the tree in the midst of the Garden of Eden. They failed miserably in keeping just that one Law. All of their children, even us, also fail daily and miserably at keeping the Law of the Lord God. Moses was given the Ten Commandments by the Lord God's hand on Mount Sinai, and we fail miserably every day to keep the Ten Commandments. The Command given to Adam and Eve, and the Ten Commandments are the written Law which is also written on men's hearts. We know good and evil. We know right from wrong. It is in our very nature. This is why the Gentiles, who knew not the Ten Commandments, and the unbelieving world in our day, knows right from wrong. Even those who lie and say that something is right, in their heart of hearts they know it is wrong. It is not that they do not know that it is wrong, it is

that they do not care that it is wrong. They are driven by their base emotions to fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

The giving of the rite of circumcision to Abraham was to serve as a physical sign that Abraham and his children would subject themselves to the Lord God's rule and authority. He would be their God, and they would be His people. This is the Law under which our Lord + Jesus is subjected. He places Himself under the same rule and authority of the Lord God. He places Himself under the same Law which He gave to His people. We break this Law continually, try as we might to do the opposite. But this is the very reason that our Lord + Jesus is placed under the Law by His parents Sts. Mary and Joseph. He is circumcised on the eighth day, just as the Lord commanded Abraham to do to all his seed. And being placed under the Law, we now have someone, someone who is fully Man, to obey the Law perfectly. His keeping of the Law is credited to us, because as a man He can keep it for us, and as the Lord God, He can credit it to all mankind.

How do we get credited with our Lord's keeping of the Law? It is only by faith. And this faith is gifted to us by the work of the Holy Ghost. He works through the means of grace, the Word and the Blessed Sacraments to create faith in us.

This is what St. Paul, the Apostle, writes to the churches of Galatia in our Epistle reading for the day. Before faith came, we were under the Law. We were subject to a Law which we could not keep. We were subject to a Law which condemns us. Now through faith, that is, faith in what our Lord + Jesus has done on our behalf, we are credited with the righteousness of the Lord + Jesus. Because He kept the Law perfectly, now through faith, we are also credited with the perfect keeping of the Law. Because He is subject to the Law and is circumcised, we are also spiritually circumcised by faith. What He does as a man on our behalf, is now ours through faith.

St. Paul says that before faith came, the Law was our tutor. What did the Law teach us? It taught us that the Law is a curb. It restrained us, and the rest of mankind, from gross outbursts of sin. There are certain things that we simply do not do because we fear the punishment of those things. The Law as our tutor also taught us that it is a mirror. It shows us our sin. We look into the mirror of the Law and see how little we are able to keep the full tenets of the Law. Our Lord + Jesus pointed out in the Sermon on the Mount the minutia required of the Lord God to perfectly keep the Law. We hear "Do not murder" and realize that this does not just mean do not kill someone, but also means to not hate our fellowman. We are shown our sin by the teaching of the Law. The Law also teaches us that it is a guide. It teaches us what is pleasing to the Lord God to do, and what He abhors.

Before faith came, we were taught by the Law. It taught us right from wrong, but it did not teach us salvation. It taught us how to please the Lord God, but also taught us that we could never fully attain to the righteousness that He requires. Faith on the other hand, shows us our Savior. It shows us how the Lord + Jesus, Whose Name means, Savior, is the One Who wins reconciliation between us and the Lord God. Faith teaches us that we now have a new means of becoming the Lord God's people. Abraham and his descendants, even our Lord + Jesus, were made His people through the cutting off of the flesh. They were circumcised and made His people. Faith teaches us that we are made the people of the Lord God through the waters of Holy Baptism.

By Holy Baptism, the Holy Ghost not only washed away our sin. He does not just crucify and bury us with the Christ, but He also raises us up from the dead through faith to walk before the Lord God as a new creation. He creates faith in us by the rite of Holy Baptism that we might cling in faith to the works and merits of the Christ. Circumcision was only a foreshadowing and precursor to the rite of Holy Baptism. Circumcision was a physical mark of being a child of the Lord God, a mark which only belonged to one gender. Women were part of the covenant through their male counterparts who subjected themselves to circumcision. But it only points to Holy Baptism. Now male and female,

husband and wife, Jews and Greeks, can all receive this sign of being a part of the family of the Lord God.

Holy Baptism creates faith in us. This faith trusts that He Whose Name is + JESUS, has subjected Himself fully under the Law of the Lord God, and has perfectly fulfilled the Law on our behalf. The faith created in Holy Baptism is renewed and strengthened by the other means of grace. The pure preaching of the Word of the Lord God, the Sacrament of Holy Absolution, the Sacrament of the Altar, even our gathering together as the family of the Lord God to share our faith with one another, strengthens and sustains our faith until our last day on earth, when we will no longer be subject to a Law we cannot keep, but we will be free from its bondage, and be able to keep the Lord's Law perfectly ourselves.

This is why we continue to daily make the sign of the holy cross, and say the Name that was placed upon us at our Holy Baptism. We have been made the heavenly Father's children, for He has placed His Name upon us. We have been baptized into the Lord's Name. We have been baptized into the Christ. Therefore, my dear friends, we can daily, and often, remind ourselves that we have been saved from sin and death by the One Whose Name means Savior. We have been saved from sin and death by the One Who subjected Himself to the Law on our behalf. When we make the sign of the holy cross, we are confessing that we have sinned, but by the Lord's grace and mercy, we have been placed into His holy family. We have been adopted into the household of the Lord God. And therefore, our home is not here on this earth, but it is in heaven. Through faith we will be brought out of this vale of tears into our eternal home in Heaven, for our Lord and Savior, has subjected Himself to the Law for us, and has perfectly fulfilled it on our behalf. 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!*