



Sermon: Nothing But the Blood of Jesus – Todd Goldschmidt

Sunday Service 10:15 am – January 1st, 2012 – At [Living Hope Lutheran Church](#)

Sermon Text: Luke 2:21 – (NIV 1984)

Jesus Presented in the Temple

²¹ On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise him, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived.

²² When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it was written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”), ²⁴and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: “a pair of doves or two young pigeons.”

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. ²⁷Moved by the Spirit he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

²⁹Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. ³⁰For my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹which you have prepared in the sight of all people, ³²a light for revelation for the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”

³³ The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, ³⁵so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

³⁶ There was also a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth.



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New Years Day Service 10:15 am – January 1st, 2012 – At [Living Hope Lutheran Church](#)

On New Year's Day the last thing anyone wants to hear about is more bloodshed. Didn't we have enough of that in 2011, with all of the war, violence and natural disasters in our world? Can't we start 2012 on a more positive, upbeat note? But there it is, almost hidden in the lone verse that follows right after the magnetic charm of the familiar Christmas Gospel from Luke chapter two: "the child was circumcised." Eight days after His birth and a few weeks shy of His presentation in the temple, the baby born in Bethlehem had His foreskin removed and received His name: Jesus, "The LORD saves." From the beginning, His life was marked with bloodshed! So, on the heels of the Nativity of our Lord we're going to get a little bloody on January 1, 2012.

For the 1st century Jew, the practice of circumcision was theological rather than medical or cultural. It had nothing to do with good hygiene or social standing. It had to do with God's promise. The LORD established circumcision with Abram and his descendants as a sign of His covenant with them, that He would be their God and that they would be His people (Gen. 17:7, 10-11). It served as a visible reminder of God's promise to Abram that through one of his descendants, all nations on earth would be blessed. The Jews were to live as God's people, walk in His ways and trust His promises to send the Savior of the world through their race. Sadly, although the Israelites were ritually circumcised, all too often their hearts were spiritually far from the LORD.

Mary's Son was marked with that same covenantal sign on His 8th day. His circumcision wasn't the sign of a promise made but of God's promise kept: He was the Savior of the world, the long-awaited offspring of Abram who was to come. He lived according to the circumcision of His heart as well as His body. He flawlessly kept every nuance of God's Law in our place, fulfilling each aspect of the Old Covenant that portended His arrival and His mission to rescue us sinners from Satan. From start to finish, He revealed Himself as the true Son of God and so He became "the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes" as Paul wrote to the Romans (10:4).

On the day of his Bris, the baby's father would name his son. The purpose of the name wasn't to be cute, clever or creative but to communicate the hopes, dreams and aspirations of his parents for their son. In the case of the Christ Child, "he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived." The angel Gabriel told Joseph to name the newborn child "Jesus," explaining: "because he will save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). Already on the 8th day of His earthly existence, Jesus' blood flowed, foreshadowing the redemptive blood that would flow from His sacred veins years on the cross. Jesus' cross was the goal and purpose of His manger. The wood of both, in a very significant sense, was hewn from the same tree.

Sunday Worship Service: 10:15 A.M. (Sunday School/Adult Bible Class 9am)

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The baby born in the City of David, whose birth was heralded by angels to lowly shepherds in the nearby Judean hills, came to fulfill God's Old Testament covenant laws to the letter in order to establish the gracious gospel of full and free forgiveness. Paul writes in his letter to the Galatians, "When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons" (4:4-5). Again, Jesus' life under the righteous requirements of God's law had to be absolutely flawless. So He paid meticulous attention to the minutest details of each and every aspect of the Old Covenant laws.

Under the Old Covenant, circumcision was an outward sign signifying membership in God's covenant family of faith. Jewish parents who brought their newborn sons to the mohel for the ancient rite were confessing their faith in and obedience to God in much the same way that Christian parents of today do when they bring their newborn sons and daughters to the baptismal font. Similarly, they were to train their sons—as well as their daughters—to know the God of the covenant as their personal God of hope & deliverance, justice and grace much like believing parents are to introduce their baptized children to the Triune God of their salvation so that they can grow in their baptismal grace and mature in their Christian faith and understanding. Parents under both systems are also commissioned to see that their children reflect their right relationship with the LORD by living lives that glorify Him and serve others in and with His love. Without the inward disposition of the heart, the outward alteration of the flesh was nothing (Rom. 2:25-29). In the same way, baptismal faith—if not nourished with Word and Sacrament—can eventually dry up.

So this initiatory rite of circumcision which Christ submitted to, fulfilled and rendered obsolete is a good picture of our own baptism—especially infant baptism: outwardly foolish & apparently impotent, yet possessing the saving strength and wisdom of God's word, command and promise. It humbles us and our flesh and mind while exalting and honoring God's Word and will. Jesus' baptism gives our baptism its power, filling it with the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. When we're baptized into His name, we're baptized into all that He accomplished for us by His perfect life, His innocent death and His glorious resurrection. Paul writes, "Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life" (Rom.6:3-4). You and I have been baptized into "the name which is above every name . . . the name of Jesus;" the name at which "every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth" when He comes again to judge the living and the dead; the name at which "every tongue" will be compelled to "confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11)!



What's in a name? In Jesus' case, absolutely all that we need on this, the first day of 2012 and every day to come! We worship & serve, rejoice in & confess to, pray to and praise the name of Jesus with our lips and with our lives; with deeds of kindness that stretch us beyond our comfort zones; with dollars given to support the preaching of the gospel here and throughout the world through dedicated missionaries, foreign seminary professors, faithful field workers & their families as they fan out across the globe in Jesus' name with the message of hope & forgiveness! What a privilege—what an honor—to be commissioned by Christ to carry out His saving work!

Ask yourself these questions: “How will I effectively share the name of Jesus with others in the New Year ahead? Will I teach Sunday School or assist one of the teachers? Will I joyfully bring the first-fruits of the money God had given me as offerings throughout the year? Will I give someone a ride to church, chaperone a youth group outing, help out at Movie Nights, witness to that friend or relative, neighbor or coworker that I've had on my heart and in my prayers? Will I serve in the nursery or usher, help out at a work party or a potluck? Will I faithfully use the gifts and abilities the Lord has blessed me with to be a blessing to others? Most importantly, will I sustain my trust in Jesus and nourish my soul by regularly attending worship, Bible class and the Lord's Supper? Will I feed my faith on a daily basis with the Bread of Life by digging in to His Word?

The name “Jesus” explains our Savior's entire life, including His circumcision on the 8th day. The shedding of His blood at His Bris points ahead to His crucifixion as the final place of salvation. “Without the shedding of blood,” God said, “there can be no forgiveness.” And so the sacred Lamb of God was slaughtered on the altar of the cross. There our sin and guilt were removed—“cut off,” if you will—so that we might have a genuine circumcision of our heart. In place of the Old Covenant rite of circumcision, Jesus gives us the New Covenant sacrament of Holy Baptism; in place of the Passover celebration, He gives us the sacrament it pictured: Holy Communion. He takes bread, and calls it His body; He takes the cup and calls it “the new covenant of my blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.” At this altar, you receive Jesus, in, with and under the bread and the wine; Jesus, who shed His blood and gave His life for you! You and I are heirs of forgiveness, life and salvation through the holy blood of our Savior, Jesus!

Outside of the Church, it would be considered poor form at the very least, if not a bad omen, to say that the New Year begins with bloodshed. But in the Church, among God's believing sons and daughters, there can be no better beginning. And so we begin this New Year of 2012 with the blood of Jesus first shed at His circumcision and ultimately shed for us on Calvary's cross. Nothing but the blood of Jesus can cleanse us our acts that lead to death and give us eternal life. Nothing but the blood of Jesus! Amen.