

Called Jesus
Luke 2:21
January 1, 2023

Use 2:21 And at the end of eight days, when He was circumcised, He was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.

Last night you heard that the name “Jesus” means the Lord is salvation. It can also be translated the Lord saves. It is this name that was given before He was born. Yes, Jesus, the Messiah was special. He was conceived in a virgin and from then on it was a normal human life except He would never sin.

It probably isn't a coincidence that on the very first day of the year we celebrate His name, the name that is above every other name.

You may have noticed that the verse I am using for the text for today isn't the same as is printed in the sermon. The texts used in the bulletin are for the 1st Sunday after Christmas but since this is New Years Day, I am using the texts for New Years Day but I didn't tell Hannah or Jan so you are getting a sermon based on verse 21 and not 22 through 40. Yes, this sermon is based on one verse from the Bible.

As the text for this sermon was read, did you think of something we do that includes a name with an action? Circumcision was done to male children on the eighth day. Was is done to babies today where they are named? You got it, baptism. Yes, when a child is baptized their names are said as they are baptized into the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, making them another one of God's adopted children.

I don't know when your name was picked but Jesus' was before He was conceived in the womb. When Cyndi was pregnant with the child who was stillborn, we were asked what his name would be and not wanting to let it be known before he was born we said it would be Herman Heinrich Heithold. The thought of having a grandchild with that name kept them from asking us what it would be. The crazy thing is, while we were in St. Louis going to seminary, churches in the area would have seminary students come and preach at their churches when the pastor was out of town.

I was asked to preach for a service in a town west of St. Louis where some of my Dad's relatives went to church. It was a church with one of those pulpits that you had to go up the stairs and through a door to get into the pulpit that hung from the wall.

The men's group had a sausage feed or something like that after the church service so we got a meal as we got to visit with some of the relatives. After the meal we

were walking through the cemetery behind the church when we noticed the name Heithold on a couple of headstones. Guess what the name on one of the tombstones was, it was Herman Heinrich Heithold, my great grandfather. A name as a joke was a name that was real.

Jesus was a name that was real as well. He came to save the world from sin, the sin that began so many years ago as Eve, taking the fruit from the tree and giving it to her husband went against the one and only prohibition that the Lord gave the pinnacle of His creation.

It was because of that one sin, that Jesus had to come to the world as a human, as a little baby, to live the life that no one could live to die the death that no one could die to be able to give the gift that is greater than anyone could ever give.

As was mentioned last night, this is His gift to us, Himself. We can never stop remembering that it is a gift that keeps on giving. Every time you sin, you can think of what Jesus did for you and claim that gift for yourself. Because you have been given faith and now live in that faith, your sins are forgiven. Jesus is the name that does that. As Paul wrote in his letter to the Philippians: 2:9-11 Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

What father wouldn't want his son to accomplish all he set out to do? The triune God chose a time to create the world that included humans. Yes, they would be the ones who would spoil God's perfect creation to where all of creation would be affected. Yes, the creation made in the image of God would cause so much pain and suffering for all of creation.

Adam and Eve knew they had done wrong and hid from God but God in His infinite mercy allowed them to live for a long time before they would ultimately die as He promised would happen if they took from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden and eat. They would die after many years of seeing what their sin caused.

They needed a Savior provided by God. God promised that Savior in the form of a son, born of a woman who would do in Satan even though Satan would cause Him suffering. They would name their first son Cain which could mean as Luther thought could be interpreted to mean that he would be the one promised in Genesis 3:15.

They wouldn't live to see Jesus in the flesh until after they were dead. Jesus would come as promised though it would take a few thousand years. Believers would continue to look to the coming of the Messiah, Jesus until He finally appeared in that stable in Bethlehem. As you know, even the wise men from the East knew of His coming and traveled, guided by the star to where He was. We don't know how they knew of His coming, maybe from the days of Daniel and others, they may have believed of the promise too.

They were surprised that He wasn't born in the king's palace or at least in Jerusalem but after consultation they were told to go to Bethlehem where it was prophesied He would be born.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem and in eight days, He was circumcised as we have the text for this morning. He was given the name He was to be given and He lived with that name till He died. That name characteristic of who He was, is the name we know and trust for our salvation.

We know the name to mean something for the world but as John wrote: John 1:10-13 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world did not know Him. He came to his own, and His own people did not receive Him. But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

So by believing in Him, in His name, He gave the RIGHT to become children of God. By believing in Jesus, we have the Right, the Right, you mean like the Bill of Rights in our Constitution? Yes, and even more. We have the right to become children of God Himself. What a great privilege and yet do we act like it, live like it?

Yes, we may say we are offspring of human parents with a certain amount of history in our background but think about being children of God. Children of the only, most mighty God.

Do you see yourself as that child? Why not? He thinks of you as His child the child named in your baptism. You were baptized in the name of the triune God one of which is Jesus, the name that gave us the right to be God's children.

That baby in the manger was given the name Jesus and all that that name entailed. Did He think of the name He was given as He grew up in Nazareth? Did He

get teased when all the kids around Him knew He never did anything wrong? Did they say the name and ever think that Jesus might possibly be the Messiah?

I don't imagine they did because they were looking for a conquering King and Jesus probably didn't fit the bill as far as they were concerned. They were thinking of a triumphant King to come to bring Israel back to its glory days and even more. They were looking for one to fight for them but Jesus was looking to fight the fight of the whole world, the fight to conquer sin and not just a nation.

They had so many hopes for the Messiah, Jesus. They had been waiting for so many years for Genesis 3:15 to come to pass. It had been about 400 years since the last prophet. There may have been a tinge of doubt if He would actually come. That was the thoughts of some who I talked to in Beverly Hills one Spring Break from Seminary. They had waited over two thousand years from the time of the prophets. Some wondered if God had abandoned them as they waited for the promised Messiah.

We know Him. We know His name. He gave His life for us and wants us to partake of Him, the Word made flesh and available to us in His meal for us.

They called Him Jesus. We call Him the same name. It is that name, the name of the man from Nazareth who was born in a stable, grew up as the son of a carpenter, who healed the sick, raised some from the dead, and performed miracles that brought all sorts of people to Him.

Many people followed Him thinking He was the Messiah, the Messiah they heard the religious leaders tout. He showed them who the Messiah really was but it was hard to see it with the background they had counted on with Him.

He would go to the cross with their thoughts of Him crushed as He hung on that cross. How could He be the one even though He had done so many marvelous things.

He went to the cross for them and for you and me. He went there so that His name would come to pass, the Lord saves. He has saved us and we get to tell of that salvation that was for all. Use His name knowing what it means to you as His brother and sister in the faith.