

Feast of the Circumcision of Christ, 01/ 01/ 25

1. Two elements of this event that we must address
 1. The circumcision itself – sign of the covenant of the Hebrews
 2. The Name – given at circumcision.
 3. Together, this is an establishment of identity – you belong to a people and your name is given to that people so that they know who you are. You know yourself. Others know you too.
2. Carry in our bodies a mark, a perpetual reminder who we are. At the point of procreation as well - succession. The covenant takes us out of our natural humanity and binds us to a consecrated people through time.
Supersedes time
 1. covenantal faithfulness is not strictly individual. Depends upon parents faithfulness for their children.
3. Mark is limited
 1. Only Hebrews/Jews
 2. Only Males

4. Ephesians 2:11-. Both Jews and Gentiles brought near to God in Christ. In Jesus, two peoples have been made one in the covenant sign of baptism.
5. Also for both sexes. Personhood, spiritual agency, of women affirmed for they are now baptized as well.
6. Christ is the cornerstone of the new temple of God, we are the stones built upon him. All become one in Him.
7. Now the name "Jesus" is similar to the Old Testament name "Joshua". Both mean "Savior".
 1. Joshua conquered the promised land, his actions made real to the people of God their promised inheritance.
 2. Jesus, in His ministry, reconquers the promised land spiritually. Brings healing and wholeness to God's New Covenant people
 3. Jesus is our Savior, freeing us from the exile of sin and bringing us into our inheritance, our promised land, into the presence of God.
8. His Name, determined by God and covenantally given Him by Joseph/Mary at circumcision announced to all just who this boy was to be.

9. In His common humanity, Christ represents all of mankind. In His covenantal life, Christ represents the perfect fulfillment of the Jewish law. Becomes for us the perfect representative for all.
10. Our task is to establish our identity in Christ who is the head of God's New Covenant people.
 1. Through sacraments (baptism, Lord's supper, minor sacraments)
 2. Through faithful living/discipleship. At the Name of Jesus every knee shall bow. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.
 3. Do you fear God? More specifically, do you fear Christ who has the Name given above all others, who has the power to save or to condemn, who is the judge of all?
 4. We approach with confidence because of His gracious promises, but let us never be presumptuous. If we do not strive for righteousness in this life, then we do not have a great enough appreciation for the person of Christ, for the Name of Christ, for him who has the power of life and death.

5. As Christ humbled Himself for us in His Incarnation, as He lived a perfect life of obedience for us, as His Name is above all other names, let us, in the power of His Spirit, walk in care and confidence, walk in obedience to and love for Him. Let us work out of salvation with fear and trembling.
6. In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. AMEN

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