

From the Pulpit of the Japanese Baptist Church of North Texas  
December 30, 2018

His Name Is Jesus  
Luke 2:21

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.

**1. Believing His Name**

A boy born out of Maria was named “Jesus” on the eighth day when he was circumcised. Normally, a father gives the name of the child, but the name “Jesus” was set beforehand by God because God is the true father of Jesus.

The angel told Joseph, who was to be the Mary’s husband, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” And Joseph did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took Mary as his wife and named his son Jesus. In the Bible, there is no single word of what Joseph said. It seems that Joseph was a man did not talk about the unnecessary things and earnestly followed the word of God.

There is a reason why God chose “Jesus” for His Son. The name was a representation of Jesus’ mission. “Jesus” is a Greek version of “Joshua” in Hebrew. Joshua was the leader of the Ephraimites when

Moses led Israel escape from Egypt. Then, Moses chose a leader one by one from each tribe and had them assess the promised land. Ten of them were afraid and said, “There are strong people there, we will be destroyed.” But Joshua and Caleb, the leader of the Judah tribe, said, “This is the great land. With the help of the Lord, we are able to enter in there.” They insisted with faith. That pleased God and Joshua was chosen to be the successor of Moses. He introduced people to the promised land, and let Israel settle there after wondering in the wilderness for forty years.

“Joshua” means “Yahweh saves.” As its name implies, Joshua has faith that the Lord God will save the people of God. And he brought a God’s salvation to the people. Likewise, the Son of God has become “the person who saves His people from their sins.” Therefore, the Son was named “Joshua,” that is, “Jesus.”

Joshua brought a salvation only to the people of Israel. But Jesus brings the salvation to not only one country and nation, but also to people of every nations. “He will save His people from their sins.” His people are not only Israel, but it includes everyone in the world. Joshua lead those who were saved from the Egyptian slaves into the land of Canaan, but Jesus lead those who were saved from slavery of sin to the “Kingdom of God.” It is ruled by “righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” (Romans 14: 17) and it is the “Eternal Kingdom.”

The Bible teaches that the name of Jesus forgives sin (John 1: 12), heals illness (Acts 4:10, James 5: 14), and saves others (Romans 10: 1). Those who believe in Jesus suffered because of Jesus' name, but they boasted of Jesus’ name and rejoiced it (Acts 5:41). And, “And

there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12). “No other name!” Let us firmly believe that only Jesus can save us and His name is the only one name can rescue our soul.

## **2. Knowing His Name**

In the Bible, Jesus was called various names. “Prince of Peace,” “Mighty God,” and “Wonderful Counselor” in Isaiah 9:6; “Holy One” in Luke 1:35; “Lamb of God” in John 1:29; “Prince of Life” in Act 3:15; “Lion of Tribe of Judah” and “Root of David” in Rev 5:5.

Jesus had been called various names such as “Venus of dawn,” “Lily of valley,” “Lion” and names of planets, plants, and animals. Sometimes he had been called the names of role such as “King,” “Priest,” “Judge,” “Councilor officer.” If you read the Bible carefully, you can find more than 120 title names for Jesus. The Son of God has various names because they represents his various works. Jesus works for us in various ways and saves and leads us to the salvation and blessing. Jesus is the One who can answer every necessity of us.

However, there are several contradictory names for Jesus. Jesus is called “Lord” and “Slave.” He is called “Judge” and “Advocate.” “Son of God” and “Son of carpenter.” “God” and “Man.” “Father” and “Son,” “Lion” and “Lamb.”

Jesus is called “Lord God, Lamb of God” in “Gloria.” “Gloria” is the song, which praises Jesus, singing, “For you alone are holy. You alone are the Lord. You alone, O Jesus Christ, are most high.” But at the same time, it tells us that Lord God became the Lamb of God, and he died for our sins. Jesus is “Lord God” and “Lamb of God”

simultaneously. Jesus has the power to save the human beings because He is God. And, we, the sinners, will be saved because He became the Lamb of God and sacrificed himself. Therefore, “Lord God” and “Lamb of God” are not contradictory, but the perfect expression for Jesus’ character and works. We may need more than one week for meditating just one of his title names, since each of them has the rich meaning. We realize that Jesus is totally different from any others and one and only Savior for us. When we truly His name is our salvation, we are led to great happiness, appreciation, and praise.

When Jacob fought a man, he said, “Please tell me your name.” (Genesis 32:29) To know the name of a person means that you know the person. The man said, “Why do you ask my name,” and left from Jacob. The man was God whom Jacob had already known. When Moses asked God for his name, God answered him, “I am who I am,” or “Yahweh.” (Exodus 3:13-15) By asking and meditating God’s name leads us the deeper knowledge of God.

When Jesus was with his disciples at the Last Supper, he prayed a long prayer for his disciples and the future believers. And, he concluded it with these words: “I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.” (John 17:26) “I made known to them your name” means showing God Himself. This does not mean passing down some knowledge about “God.” Jesus also said, “I will continue to make it known.” To put it simply, the life of faith is for knowing of God and continue to know Him. Our life, every day, every single seconds, we shall know Jesus, the Son of God, who became a man, through the Word and prayer, and by the Holy Spirit.

Knowing God and His Christ will fulfill the believers and become the source of power for all of good works.

### **3. Calling His Name**

I have talked about “Believing His Name” and “Knowing His Name.” Let us move about “Calling His Name.” The one, who believes and knows His name, is the one who is calling His name at the same time. Romans 10:10 says, “For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth, one confesses and is saved.” To believe in the name of Jesus is to say, “Jesus, you are my Savior and my Lord. Save me, I am your servant.” Call on Jesus with His name on your mouth. We are saved not only by believing in their hearts, but also by calling His name on our mouth. Therefore, the Bible says those who believed in Jesus and were saved, “who call the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 9: 14, Romans 15: 20, 1 Corinthians 1: 2) And the word “Calling His Name” refers to prayer and worship in the Bible. The believers gathered at the church for prayer and worship, and enthusiastically called the name of Jesus, and praised Himself from the heart when they were worshiping. No, not only when they gathered in the church, but also their daily lives, they might tell the name of Jesus.

I still remember stories heard from Reverend Akira Hatori a long time ago. It was when he stayed in a room on the second floor of an inn of a town to preach at a church there. Early in the morning, he heard a voice “Fish, Fish...” When looking out from the window, a fish seller was loading fish in the wheelbarrow and was selling it. In Japan, such a sight was seen in country side some time ago. When he

saw that fish seller, the fish shop was raising a voice and saying. “Fish, Fish...” and in and out all of the intricate streets in the town, regardless the fish could be sold or not. Reverend Hatori looked at it and thought, “Oh, I wonder if I went to every corner of the alley like this fish seller , saying ‘Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ...’ and telling others that name of Jesus.”

At that time, Reverend Hatori worked for the evangelization of Japan with himself scattered. He was a person who had undergone a major operation of the heart such as living or dying, but he visited a patient who was in the same hospital room and shared the Gospel just after he was released from the hospital. Such a pastor was told, “Am I preaching the name of Jesus without being ashamed?” When I heard that, I was really ashamed to think that I was lazy and not courageous.

Philippians 2:9-11 said “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.” If the name of Jesus can be exalted in every place, whether in heaven, on the earth, under the earth, it must still be in the church. Among the Christians, I wish to hear that we say, “Jesus is wonderful!” each other and praise the name of Jesus. People in the world seek out their names to be praised. But we do not care about our names. Just call on the name of Jesus. Only His name should be exalted. I sincerely pray that the “koinonia” calling Jesus’ name will grow up among the Japanese in this area.

**(Prayer)**

God, the Father of Jesus Christ, you have named your Son “Jesus” and showed that He would save us from our sins. You are inviting us to keep this name, to know the meaning of the name, and to receive the power of the name. Help us always call on the name of the Lord. We pray in our most beloved name, Jesus. Amen.