

What to Name the Baby?

12-26-2021

Scripture: Isaiah 9:2 – 7, Colossians 3:12 – 17, and
Luke 1:46 – 56 (Read during message)

Elizabeth told Mary that the fruit of her womb was blessed. Mary looked down on her stomach and noticed how it had grown. Mary savored the poetry of Elizabeth's words and Mary imagined the sweet and precious child swelling inside of her. Mary may have wondered how God could be so vulnerable. When Mary ate, she could feel the baby kicking with renewed energy and when she did not eat, she could feel the baby's weakness.

When Mary worked around Elizabeth's house, Mary began to sing. She hummed for the child growing within her. She praised God for the life forming inside of her. She sang - (Read Luke 1:46 – 56)

Mary's senses sharpened during her pregnancy. The colors seemed brighter as she became more with child. She saw things differently as the child grew inside of her. Foods smelled richer and her taste was more intense. Not only did Mary perceive dangers more clearly, but her delight in what was happening to her overwhelmed her. Mary felt everything deeply! Mary's heart felt heavy and swollen with gratitude.

There was a certain abundance that she could not explain. Simple wonders overwhelmed her. Her belly was full of goodness.

Here is one conversation that Mary did not have with Joseph as they awaited the birth of the baby she was carrying – What should we name the baby?

Unlike most people awaiting a birth, Mary and Joseph had no question about what they would call this child! When you had a child, did you and your spouse talk about what to name the child? My wife and I did – we would share many names until the right one came about.

I have known some people who knew even before they got pregnant what they would name their children. They had ‘family’ names that would be passed down.

My father was named Anthony Francis Plocinski Jr. after his father. I had a student in school who was named ‘Timrek’ after his father ‘Kermit’. When Timrek shared this connection, I did not understand the connection until he shared that ‘Timrek’ is Kermit spelled backwards! To each his own!

Do you know where your name came from? Do you know how your parents named you? My mom thinks we gave our three boys Jewish names because we named them – Joshua, Jacob, and Samuel!

The angels who visited Mary and then Joseph told them both that the baby’s name would be ‘JESUS’. The angel that appeared to Joseph explained that his name indicated that the baby would ‘save his people from their sins’.

The baby would be called ‘Immanuel’ which means ‘God is with us’ because the baby would be God in human form. He would be the deity wrapped in swaddling clothes.

The prophet Isaiah revealed additional titles for the child – ‘Wonderful Counselor’, ‘Mighty God’, ‘Everlasting Father’ and ‘Prince of Peace’ which is my favorite name! All these names were given to the baby because he would be all of those things.

It is always exciting to name a new baby, but no other baby had such a powerful and world changing name as Jesus. He would become – Jesus, the One who will be called Messiah!

What a thrill for us to be able to call on the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. There is no other name that saves!

Let us praise Jesus and contemplate everything Jesus means to us during this post-Christmas time.

One of the greatest things you can give your children is a ‘good name’. Passing on to the next generation a ‘good name’ is one of the most important things to do as a parent.

A good name is also vital for believers in Jesus. In our scripture reading by Paul in Colossians, we are reminded who it is that we represent. Have a good character is like wearing good cloths with the Jesus label on display upon them.

As God’s chosen people, we need to clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. We need to bear with each other and forgive one another. And over all these virtues, we need to put on LOVE!

In my closet growing up, I had three sets of cloths – play cloths, school cloths, and church cloths. My play cloths was the largest set of cloths I had. My school cloths was next. And finally my church cloths were by far the smallest set of cloths I had!

But if you are going to follow Jesus, your Sunday cloths aren't just for Sunday! We must wear them everywhere and all the time so that God works in us reflects Jesus. When our lives and characteristics demonstrate those of Jesus, then and only then can we take on his name!

May we prayerfully and carefully represent Jesus as he provides what we need!

As we evaluate our wardrobe and how well we dress, may we find in us the character of Jesus. Let us see his wisdom, power, and guidance in us so that we may reflect Jesus more clearly.

Let us pray:

Nourishing God, thank you for the sweetness and abundance of our full and precious lives.

Thank you, heavenly Father, for sending us Jesus who is our Savior, our Counselor, our Prince of Peace, and our Messiah. We celebrate his birth because we know that his life and death and resurrection purchased for us eternal life.

Father, forgive us when we do not represent Jesus well. Give us strength and courage to be better dressed for your glory. We pray this in Christ's name sake – AMEN.