

THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

*Behold!*

THE LAMB OF GOD!

*In the Church Year calendar—*

Today is the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Epiphany

THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

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# The Church Year (or Christian) Calendar

- ▶ His story and our place in His story
  - ▶ *The unfolding of the story of Christ—  
from birth as Savior to reign as King*
  - ▶ *The revealing of what God is doing through Christ  
to redeem humanity and bring us into His plan*
  - ▶ *Our response to Christ and to living within God's plan*

# SEASONS OF THE CHURCH YEAR

- ▶ Advent (4 weeks) - Anticipation of the Promised One
- ▶ Christmas (12 days) - Incarnation: the mystery of  
God with us
- ▶ Epiphany (7 weeks) - Revealing of the Savior
  - ▶ *the worship of the Magi; baptism, teaching, transfiguration*

- ▶ Lent (7 weeks) - Crucifixion of the Lamb
  - ▶ *journey to Jerusalem; Palm Sunday, Holy Week, Good Friday*
- ▶ Easter (7 weeks) - Resurrection of the Victor
  - ▶ *Resurrection Sunday, Ascension Day*
- ▶ Pentecost (23-28 weeks)– Outpouring of the Spirit
  - ▶ *Pentecost Sunday - Christ the King Sunday*

## TWO SEASONS OF ORDINARY TIME

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- ▶ Epiphany - Revealing of the Savior
  - ▶ Winter Season of Ordinary Time (Season of Revelation)
    - ▶ *"Who do you say that I am?"*
    - ▶ *"If anyone would follow Me . . ."*
- ▶ Pentecost - Outpouring of the Spirit
  - ▶ Summer Season of Ordinary Time (Season of Harvest)
    - ▶ *"You are My witnesses"*
    - ▶ *"Go into all the world: preach, baptize, make disciples"*

## ALSO SEEN AS “KINGDOM TIME”

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- ▶ Epiphany

- ▶ First Season of Kingdom Time

- ▶ *“Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”*

- ▶ Pentecost

- ▶ Latter Season of Kingdom Time

- ▶ *“... he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ”*

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# epiphany

- ▶ the *appearance* or manifestation of a divine being
  - ▶ *"Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*
  - ▶ *"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."*
- ▶ the *perception* of the essential nature or meaning of something
  - ▶ *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

MATTHEW 3.1-17

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**JESUS WHO TOOK OUR PLACE**

## FOUR KEY DETAILS—

- ▶ John the Baptizer and his message to repent from sin
- ▶ Jesus and His baptism to “fulfill all righteousness”
- ▶ The Spirit of God who descended on Jesus
- ▶ The Father who declared:  
*“This is my Son, whom I love;  
with Him I am well pleased.”*

## JOHN THE BAPTIZER

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**“REPENT FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND.”**

This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:

A voice of one calling in the desert,

“Prepare the way for the Lord,

make straight paths for Him.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Isaiah 40.3

“Cursed is everyone who does not continue to everything written in the Book of the Law.”

*-The Apostle Paul, Galatians 3.10,  
quoting the Law, Deuteronomy 27.26*



*-The Heidelberg Catechism, 1563*

Q. What is your only comfort in life and death?

A. That I am not my own,<sup>1</sup> but belong—  
body and soul,  
in life and in death <sup>2</sup>—  
to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>1Corinthians 6.19-20    <sup>2</sup>Romans 14.7-9



Q. What must you know to live and die in the joy of this comfort?

A. Three things:

first, how great my sin and misery are;

second, how I am set free from all my sins and misery;

third, how I am to thank God for such deliverance.



Q. How do you come to know your misery?

A. The law of God tells me.

*... for [the law's] purpose is to keep people from having excuses, and to show that the entire world is guilty before God. For no one can ever be made right with God by doing what the law commands. The law simply shows us how sinful we are.*

*-Romans 3.19-20*

## JESUS THE ATONING SUBSTITUTE

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**“BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD WHO TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD.”**

*The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’ I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.”*

*-John 1.29-31*

“ Then John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’ I have seen and I testify that this is God’s Chosen One.”

-The Gospel of John, 1.32-34

“*Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented.*

*-The Gospel Matthew 3.13-15*

“*In coming to John for baptism, it is as if  
Christ wanted to say:*

*Although I am not myself a sinner, nevertheless  
I now bring with me the sin of the whole world,  
so that now I am only a sinner and the greatest  
sinner in all the world.”*

*-Martin Luther*

“ Christ Jesus redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, as it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.”

*-The Apostle Paul, Galatians 3.13,  
quoting the Law: Deuteronomy 21.23*

“ But now a righteousness from God, apart from the law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Christ Jesus to all who believe.

*-Romans 3.21-22*

“ There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God—and are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

*-Romans 3.22-24*

## THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

- ▶ Where does this difference come from?
  - ▶ From the Spirit who is joined with the Gospel and not with the Law.
- ▶ What follows from this?
  - ▶ The Law commands but gives no strength.

- ▶ What does the Gospel do?
  - ▶ It gives freely all that it requires of us.
- ▶ What other difference is there between them?
  - ▶ The Law has no compassion on sinners.
- ▶ What about the gospel?
  - ▶ It offers mercy only to sinners.

- ▶ What other difference is there?
  - ▶ In the manner of our justification.
- ▶ What does the Law demand for our justification?
  - ▶ Our perfect obedience.
- ▶ What does the gospel demand?
  - ▶ Faith only in the obedience of Christ Jesus.
- ▶ Does the Gospel favor the transgression of the Law?
  - ▶ No, it gives strength to obey the Law.

## THE SPIRIT OF ADOPTION

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**“I SAW THE SPIRIT COME DOWN FROM HEAVEN AND REMAIN ON HIM.”**

*But when the set time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. Because you are His sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.” So you are no longer a slave, but God’s child; and since you are His child, God has made you also an heir.*

*Galatians 4.4-7*

## THE AFFIRMATION OF THE FATHER

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**“THIS IS MY PRICELESS SON; I AM DEEPLY PLEASED WITH HIM.”**

God the Father wants us to know—that is, those who have thrown their hope for God’s favor on Jesus—

- ▶ how much we have in Jesus
- ▶ how accepted we are in Jesus
- ▶ how secure we are in Jesus

## THE SUM OF IT ALL

- ▶ The Law, based on God's infinite righteousness, condemns everyone—regardless of culture, ethnicity, education, wealth, or personal morality.

*There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*

*Romans 3.23*

- ▶ In His love for us, God sent Jesus—who perfectly obeyed the Law—to take our place as a cursed and condemned sinner on the cross.

*Christ Jesus redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, as it is written,*

*“Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.”<sup>1</sup>*

*Galatians 3.13*

<sup>1</sup> The Law: Deuteronomy 21.23



In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation<sup>1</sup> for our sins.

*-1 John 4.10*

<sup>1</sup>propitiation: a payment that satisfies the judgment of guilt for breaking the law

- ▶ For those who believe God's judgment about their sinfulness and guilt, and who put their faith in Jesus Christ who lived a perfect life but died for our guilt, God forgives their sin and declares them no longer guilty.

*We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. . . . For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed His life, shedding His blood.*

*Romans 3.22a, 25*

*For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.*

*2 Corinthians 5.21*

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*-2 Corinthians 5.21*

“ 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.

*-Romans 6.4*