

Our Identity in Jesus – Jan. 1, 2012

Eternal Father, you gave to your incarnate Son the holy name of Jesus to be the sign of our salvation: Plant in every heart, we pray, the love of him who is the Savior of the world, our Lord Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

LOOK

Much thought is given to the naming of children in our culture.

1. Talk about the experience of naming your own children or observing close friends and relatives naming their children. What factors did you/they consider and why was it so important?
2. Every culture has different customs around birth, circumcision, baptism, naming, etc. of infants. Share about a practice from your family or culture.

BOOK

Read Luke 2:15-21

After the angels reveal the news about the miraculous birth of Jesus to the shepherds, the shepherds set out to visit the Messiah child.

1. How does the Gospel describe the decision of the shepherds to visit the holy child?
2. How is Mary affected by the visit? How are the shepherds changed?
3. Mary and Joseph had Jesus circumcised on the eighth day. Why was this important? Why would Jesus be named at this event?
4. God is called by many different names throughout the Bible. Jesus means “God saves”. Going beyond the obvious, why was this name commanded by the angels?

TOOK

Names are connected to our identity but our identities grow and change and sometimes our names do as well. We become “honey” to a spouse or “mom” to our children or we hyphenate or change our last name when we marry. Maybe we discard a nickname from youth.

1. Even if our names remain the same, our identity in Christ can change. How has your identity in Jesus changed in the last year?
2. What new identity is God calling you to in 2012?