

**HIS Presentation OUR Purification!**  
**(Luke 2:22-32)**  
**The Purification of Mary and the Presentation of Our Lord**  
**Pastor Espinosa**

**Introduction: God is keeping things real in today's Gospel on the Purification of Mary and the Presentation of our Lord!**

- A. The physical and physiological seasons of the lives of people are not easy. In fact they are very difficult and remind us of our frailty and even our sin.**
- B. For example, "growing pains" are a real phenomenon. At age 13 I grew in height so much that it caused tremendous back pain. I didn't know what was happening to me and I was very alarmed.**
- C. We also suffer on the other end of the spectrum and as a pastor I serve God's people who mourn the limitations of their bodies that come with age. Already as I near 50, I've been introduced to bodily aches that are new to me, but I know these are nothing compared to my fathers and mothers who are 20, 30 or 40 years older than I am.**
- D. The pains of the body are an indication of sin having come into the world: Genesis 3:16-19:**

***"To the woman he said, 'I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.' And to Adam he said, 'Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, "You shall not eat of it," cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."***

- E. As the Super Bowl is upon us there has been a lot of talk about the sport itself. This is a violent sport. Yes, the NFL athletes are paid a lot of money, but they also pay a great price. Concussions occur all of the time, ACL injuries, knee injuries; Peyton Manning the superstar quarterback playing today is not unfamiliar with neck surgeries.**

- F. Our labor is dangerous and expends life from us even when we know that our work has been sanctified and we have a good understanding of holy vocation. The work is still exerting and costly. My dad was a journeyman mechanic and for many years he worked on heavy machinery for John Deere. One day, a tractor fell from its jack stands. My father's arm was caught between another jack stand and the tractor. He almost lost his arm. They had to implant a steel plate into his arm to keep it intact.**
  
- G. Furthermore, if there are not immediate physical dangers, then there are psychological ones that make-up for them. Physical harm that comes from mounting stress can have a devastating effect upon the body.**
  
- H. All of this is epitomized in childbirth. From what I read, no, natural childbirth is not the most painful thing in the world (3<sup>rd</sup> degree burns eclipse childbirth), but having said that it would be extremely difficult for a man to ever know the pain a woman goes through. I was by my wife's side during labor and I had to be careful as to how close I was to her hands at various junctures of delivery...I was never quite sure what she was going to do with her hands to my person in close proximity and on account of her pain she was capable of punching me, pinching me, and somehow blaming me for the whole thing.**

**Part I: But childbirth has other implications:**

- A. In accord with what you heard from Genesis 3, it is a reminder of sin having come into the world.**
  
- B. And the Hebrews – unlike their pagan and animistic neighbors who regarded the blood of the woman giving birth as containing supernatural life-power that could be used in ritual, magical spells, and sorcery (Kleinig, John W. Concordia Commentary: Leviticus. St. Louis: CPH, 266) – God's people did not go along with this up-side-down view. Instead they knew that the resultant blood of childbirth was that of fallen humanity, and they knew that the pain associated with childbirth was a reminder of the curse of sin.**

**C. Inevitably, therefore, the woman giving birth was rendered unclean and impure. For 7 days after childbirth the woman had to be separated from everyone else -- could not remain in normal family life -- and if she had a son she remained in ritual quarantine for 33 days: for 40 days she could not have access to anything holy.**

**D. Consider how Isaiah connects the blood of a woman associated with “a polluted garment” with the universal condition of our sin:**

***“We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment.” – Isaiah 64:6***

**E. That is, all of us have this same condition of being unclean and impure. All of us have passed through the blood of sinful humanity and “[s]urely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.” (Psalm 51:5)**

**F. And this condition is still in us. That’s what Scripture calls the sinful nature. There is this unfortunate tendency in modern Christian circles to downplay this reality and of course the world wants to ignore it altogether...but it’s there...even in the born-again believer the sinful flesh remains and it is the reason we continue to struggle with those “same old sins”...and every single day we must kill the old sinful flesh, drown it, and crucify it, because it keeps rearing its ugly head. This is why we struggle and this is why we resist the Word of God and the Holy Spirit.**

**Part II: The Lord, however, provides a cure for the sin from conception and childbirth through the conception and childbirth of One Child in particular!**

**A. In other words, childbirth is also a great blessing, because in Genesis God made a promise that the seed of the woman was going to crush the devil’s head (Gen 3:15). Through faith in *this* child, salvation is had even through child-bearing (1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:15)!...so that what was once associated with sin is now a reminder that God came through women to save all men!**

**B. I say “God came through women” because have you ever noticed some of the key great great grandmothers of Jesus mentioned in our Lord’s genealogy in St. Matthew’s Gospel? Jesus came through sinners to save sinners! God is making sure that you know the one qualification you must have in order to be saved: you **MUST** be a sinner! Then you know beyond a shadow of a doubt that Jesus came for the likes of you! To comfort you and to give you confidence in the Gospel the Word tells us about His grandmothers (all in Matthew chapter 1):**

- 1. Grandma Tamar who presented herself as a prostitute.**
- 2. Grandma Rahab who was actually a prostitute.**
- 3. Grandma Ruth who was an unclean outsider, a non-Israelite.**
- 4. Grandma “wife of Uriah” (aka Grandma Bathsheba with whom King David committed adultery).**

**These are Jesus’ grandmothers to inform you that our Savior really *did* come for sinners.**

**C. This is seen esp. in the rest of the story about Mary and Joseph. So far I’ve only mentioned that Mary had to go through the initial 7-day separation and then the 33 day quarantine, but there was still the last step: she had to bring a sacrifice to complete her purification.**

**D. The Scriptures imply that she and Joseph were poor. Evidently she could not afford to bring a lamb so she had to fall on the provision for the poor: instead she and Joseph brought two young pigeons. One for the burnt offering and the other for the sin offering (Leviticus 12).**

**E. And yet Mary and Joseph brought much more with them!**

- 1. They brought *the* Lamb above all lambs, Jesus! The poor were made rich through the 40-day old Son of God!**
- 2. They brought their son to be presented as their first-born who according to God’s Word in Exodus 13:2 had to be consecrated to the Lord and belong to the Lord.**
- 3. They brought the One whose own blood was given so as to purify us all!**

## **Conclusion: So what really happened?**

- A. When Jesus was presented, Mary was purified.**
- B. But it is also true that when Jesus was presented, *you* were purified. This we confess because He was not presented for Himself (from eternity He was already One with God the Father), but He was now presented to live for you and to die for you; to rise for you and to pray for you and to lead you today!**
- C. It is amazing that Jesus joined us in our birth, passing through sinful humanities' blood; that Jesus was circumcised at 8-days old to begin to fulfill God's Law for YOU (the Pure One joined the impure – He joined you and me) and started keeping God's Law for us, the Law we've broken, so that by trusting in Jesus, we get the credit for our brother and Lord keeping it in our stead!**
- D. And then at 40-days old, He is seen with Simeon's eyes of faith and Simeon recognizes Him! In this baby wrapped in infant's clothes, Simeon could already see the future man who was going to die for Him and for you; He already saw the Savior of the world who was going to conquer death...He knew it was Him...Simeon was given eyes to see. This is why Simeon sang what we sing for Holy Communion: *"Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation...a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel."***
- E. What Simeon was saying was that Jesus was *setting him free* from his sin...and now he had what is most important in life: complete forgiveness; complete peace and it is yours as you see through eyes of faith that Jesus has come to present Himself FOR YOU so that you through faith in Christ ARE declared to be pure. No separation for you. No quarantine for you. Just freedom, just forgiveness of sins, just eternal life because just when you needed purification, Jesus was presented! So be encouraged, be comforted, be consoled: He was presented for you! Now you're pure and have been set free from sin and death!**