



Pastor Hanke's Blog

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Distracted by the Details

Bible Reference: Luke 1:57-80

The details of Christmas can be overwhelming for anybody, but as a pastor I feel the pinch of all the normal Christmas details, plus the extra services and the pressure of knowing tons of people will worship on Christmas so I want the message to be special. It is easy to get distracted with the details, focusing on them and missing the opportunity to prepare one's heart for the season.

Any one of us can get distracted by the details. We think through the gifts we need to buy or the traditions that are important to us, trying to make sure everything is perfect. Our lesson this week takes us to a circumcision ceremony and the moment Zechariah gets his voice back. So many of the people are distracted by the detail that Zechariah's son is going to be named John rather than a family name as tradition would have it. They are so busy worrying about it, they almost miss just how powerful this moment is. A circumcision is like our baptism today, a covenant between the child and God, and a reminder that the Messiah would come. John's circumcision was even more meaningful as he would *actually* prepare the way for the Messiah to come and point others to Him. This tradition of circumcision they are used to will soon be changed to something way better.

On our last stop in preparation for Christmas, we begin where we started, with Zechariah and Elizabeth, and a promise of the Messiah, which will soon be fulfilled. At his son's circumcision, Zechariah prophesied, retracing the history that brought them to that point and preparing the people for Jesus' coming. But they are distracted. They are caught up in the tradition of names and they question why things are being done differently. They are on the verge of missing this powerful moment. The truth is, we often do this as well. All our preparations for Christmas often distract us from the message of Jesus' coming. So today let's stop. On this last Sunday before Christmas, let's prepare our hearts one more time for what is truly about to happen this week.

Peace,

Pastor Will