

# Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church



## Weekly Sermon Series

### **Taking Root: Digging in the Dirt...The Holy Grail Acts 4:5-12**

Names are very important. Much thought can be given to choosing a name. Think about parents naming their baby. Go back a couple generations and think about the Christening of a baby at which time their name was first given and christened. Think about a couple getting married and choosing which names they will be known by: the husband's, the wife's, a hyphenated version of both, each keeping their own? If the spouse's family was highly revered in the community, one was eager to take on that name.

As a child, whenever my brothers or I would call each other a name, my mother would say, "The name you just called out will be the name you will be known by," and that usually shut us up quickly, as we didn't want to be known by that bad name we had just used. And mom out of reach, someone would say, "You are what you say."

When I was growing up, I learned in Sunday school and church that I could simply say the name JESUS and that would have power to bring him near to me and help me deal with whatever trouble or sadness I found myself in. I read accounts of missionaries in the threat of death who took on an aura of surrounding greatness that scared away the ones who wanted to kill them when prayers of praise and deliverance were offered.

When Jesus took the cup (commonly referred to as “the Holy Grail”) at Maundy Thursday’s supper, he added a cup, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you’” (Luke 22:20). When the Easter weekend was over, Jesus had a “new” name: Lord over death. His blood had been poured out on Calvary’s cross and in the beatings that preceded the event. And then three days later, his blood had been restored in the resurrected body that rose out of the grave by the miracle of God. The wounds that had allowed the blood to spill out had been closed and healed with only the scar remaining. This new dimension of the Lord did not AUTOMATICALLY make him ruler over all humanity, but he became a “personal” Lord to all who believed in the entirety of ALL Jesus had become. The name JESUS now meant miracle-maker, power over evil, present everywhere, Lord over death, inspiration for speaking, and eternal salvation. In fact, his disciples couldn’t keep their mouths shut even with the threat of imprisonment by high officials. And to this day, thousands are still proclaiming the name of Jesus.

Dear Lord, come to me and empower me to be your follower. Help me discern who you are. Fill me with your Spirit so that I may make a difference in your world. Thank you for your sacrifice and example. Amen.

-- Week of May 3, 2009