

Doctrine of Circumcision

1. Circumcision is the cutting away of the useless flesh of the male phallus.
 - 1.1 Circumcision is a training aid designed to teach.
2. The ritual of circumcision is related to:
 - 2.1 A commemoration of Abraham's spiritual maturity,
 - 2.2 A commemoration of God providing the heir of promise, Isaac.
 - 2.3 The dedication of the phallus to only the right woman.
3. The meaning of circumcision must be learned from Gen 17:1-21 and its context.

Gen 17:1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless.

Gen 17:2 I will confirm my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers."

Gen 17:3 Abram fell facedown, and God said to him,

Gen 17:4 "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations.

Gen 17:5 No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations.

Gen 17:6 I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you.

Gen 17:7 I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.

Gen 17:8 The whole land of Canaan, where you are now an alien, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God."

Gen 17:9 Then God said to Abraham, "As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come.

Gen 17:10 This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised.

Gen 17:11 **You are to undergo circumcision**, and it will be the **sign** of the covenant between me and you.

Gen 17:12 For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner-- those who are not your offspring.

Gen 17:13 Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant.

Gen 17:14 Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant."

Gen 17:15 God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah.

Gen 17:16 I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her."

Gen 17:17 Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, "Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?"

Gen 17:18 And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!

Gen 17:19 And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.

Gen 17:20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes (see Gen 25:13-15 for their names) shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.

Gen 17:21 But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.

3.1 Circumcision is related to the promise and the commemoration of the four unconditional covenants:

3.1.1 Abrahamic Covenant- Gen 12:1-3; 15:1-10, 12, 17 and 18; 17:1-11 and Gen 22:16-18.

3.1.2 Davidic Covenant - 2Sa 7:10-16

3.1.3 Palestinian Covenant - Eze 20:33-37 and 42-44; Gen 15:18-21

3.1.4 New Covenant - Jer 31:31-40

4. In Gen 17:1-11 God reaffirms the Abrahamic Covenant, Palestinian and the Davidic Covenant with the ritual of Circumcision.

4.1 At this time at the ripe old age of 99 Abraham is given the heir of the promise, Isaac, who is born that very year to his aged wife Sarah.

4.2 This is not a new promise but like all blessings for time God will not bless unless there is capacity for the blessing.

4.2.1 Capacity comes from Bible Doctrine resident in the soul.

4.3 You must have a cup if God is to pour goodness and mercy; God's grace is glorified when He pours.

Psa 23:5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Psa 23:6 Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, for I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Isa 30:18 And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and **therefore will he be exalted**, that he may have mercy upon you: for the LORD is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him.

4.4 Promises of an heir, numerous descendants, extensive land, a descendent on the throne forever, a promise through the seed of Abraham to bless the world and a people who in the Millennium would show the rest of the world how to live can be found many places some of which are:

Gen 12:1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, **unto a land** that I will shew thee:

Gen 12:2 And I will make of thee a **great nation**, and I will bless thee, and **make thy name great**; and **thou shalt be a blessing**:

Gen 12:3 **And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.**

And then: Gen 15:1-10; 12, 17 and 18

Gen 15:1 After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.

Gen 15:2 And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?

Gen 15:3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.

Gen 15:4 And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.

Gen 15:5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

Gen 15:6 And he had earlier believed in the LORD; and he had counted it to him for righteousness.

Gen 15:7 And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.

Gen 15:8 And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?

Gen 15:9 And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle dove, and a young pigeon.

Gen 15:10 And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not ...

Gen 15:12 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him ...

Gen 15:17 And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

Gen 15:18 In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

And then: Gen 22:16-18

Gen 22:16 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

Gen 22:17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

Gen 22:18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

4.4.1 There were later in Scripture many enhancements to the promises showing that the unconditional covenants extended to the heirs of Abraham.

4.5 Capacity for life comes from being positive to the Word of God.

4.5.1 Abraham and Sarah had grown in grace by repeated testing; they finally had capacity for their special blessing.

4.6 Circumcision was therefore a sign of Abraham finally getting enough doctrine to enjoy his special son Isaac his unique heir.

4.7 The circumcised phallus would from this point in time be an iterative memorial and sign to commemorate Abraham's maturity and the need to grow in the faith as a post salvation demand of God.

5. Circumcision is a memorial to spiritual growth and is only a ritual of remembrance; it was a poignant reminder of God's promise to Abraham as a mature believer.

6. That it does not commemorate Abraham's salvation but is rather a post salvation commemoration of maturity is made clear in Scripture.

6.1 He had already believed for salvation in Gen 12:1-3 (see above) and as recorded in Gen 15:6.

Gen 15:6" And Abraham had earlier believed in the Lord and God counted it to him for righteousness."

7. Circumcision even when Israel was still under the conditional covenant of the Mosaic Law was not a product of the Law but a product of faith in Doctrine.

Rom 4:13 It was not through the law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith.

8. This act on the part of Abraham is used by Paul to differentiate how Abraham obtained spirituality by means of faith and not by the Law.

Rom 4:20 Yet Abraham did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God,

Rom 4:21 being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

Rom 4:22 This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness."

Rom 4:23 The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone,

Rom 4:24 but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness--for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.

9. Today in the Church Age, thanks to the Mystery Doctrines provided to us in grace, we know to call the sign of the commemoration - circumcision "**temporal sanctification**".

Jam 2:14 Expanded Translation:

"Now I want to ask you, my fellow Jewish believers, where is the benefit if a person says, "I have faith and yet this faith lacks inherent power to produce? Can faith without inherent power deliver anyone? As a fact, the answer is a resounding no! "

10. James provides a negative example showing how important it is to have an object of faith which can produce because of its inherent power.

10.1 James makes the point -- for salvation the object of the faith must be Jesus the Christ; for temporal salvation the object of faith must be God's Word.

Jam 2:19

"Come now my friends, many of you are Deist believing in one God; you think you do well, don't you know that even the demons know there is one God and they tremble and shake in absolute terror."

11. Abraham in the Gen 17:1-11 account believed God and Circumcision was a commemorative of that point in time when the promise of God became more real than reality.

12. Moses almost died because he did not circumcise his youngest son.

Exo 4:24 At a lodging place on the way, the LORD met Moses and was about to kill him.

Exo 4:25 But Zipporah took a flint knife, cut off her son's foreskin and touched Moses' feet with it. "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me," she said.

Exo 4:26 So the LORD let him alone. (At that time she said "bridegroom of blood," referring to circumcision.)

12.1 This scenario tells us how important the commemoration of post salvation growth is in the eyes of God.

13. Another example of the importance: "Only circumcised males could take part in the Passover Celebration".

Exo 12:48 "An alien living among you who wants to celebrate the LORD'S Passover must have all the males in his household circumcised; then he may take part like one born in the land. No uncircumcised male may eat of it.

Exo 12:49 The same law applies to the native-born and to the alien living among you."

13.1 The Passover celebrated the national blessing of Israel and since national blessing is dependent on a pivot of mature believers in a nation, God chose to make circumcision a requisite for Passover participation.

14. True circumcision comes from a renewing of the mind and not by the cutting away of useless flesh.

14.1 Circumcision for the Jewish legalist had become one of many rituals distorted by the Scribes.

Act 15:1 And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

Act 15:2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

14.2 Some made circumcision a requisite for salvation and for others it became a requisite for spirituality.

14.3 They failed to remember it was only a sign to teach and to commemorate Abraham's maturity.

Jer 6:10 To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it.

14.4 In the early days of the Church Age circumcision became very divisive and a party of Jewish legalist headquartered in Jerusalem became known as the Circumcision Party.

Gal 2:8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)

Gal 2:9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace ... given unto me, they gave Barnabas & me the right hands of fellowship; to go unto the heathen, and they to the circumcision.

Gal 2:10 Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

Gal 2:11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

Gal 2:12 For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.

Gal 2:13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

Gal 2:14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

Gal 2:15 We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

Gal 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Gal 2:17 But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.

Gal 2:18 For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

Gal 2:19 For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Gal 2:21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

15. In Ephesians Chapter 2 Paul makes clear that there are some who err with reference to circumcision. He also makes clear that there is now a oneness between Jew and Gentile because Christ in His spiritual death fulfilled and satisfied the Law and its ordinances.

Eph 2:11 Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "*uncircumcised*" by those who call themselves "*the circumcision*" (that done in the body by the hands of men)--

Eph 2:12 remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.

Eph 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.

Eph 2:14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,

Eph 2:15 by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace,

16. The Circumcision Party was a recognized cadre of troublemakers.

Tit 1:10 For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision:

17. In the Church Age circumcision has no real significance except as a training aid.

1Co 7:18 Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised.

1Co 7:19 Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.

18. Notice how strong Paul feels about the heterodoxy of ritual circumcision.

Gal 5:2 Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all.

Gal 5:3 Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law.

18.1 Circumcision although implemented before the coming of the Law was later codified by Moses in the Law.

Lev 12:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: ...

Lev 12:3 And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.

19. In the Church Age the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the moment of faith in Christ is our "circumcision without human hands."

Col 2:10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

Col 2:11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

Col 2:12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

Col 2:13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

20. Circumcision is used analogously:

20.1 of a command to move to spiritual maturity and stop being negative to the overtures of God,

Deu 10:16 Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff necked.

20.2 to describe the implementation of the New Covenant when Israel enters the millennium,

Deu 30:5 And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers.

Deu 30:6 And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.

20.3 to define a true Jew.

Rom 2:28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:

Rom 2:29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.