

OT-OV

Lesson 45

1. When time expired last week we were in the middle of reviewing The Doctrine of Circumcision.
2. When time expired I had just introduced the book of Galatians and how Paul suffered from the circumcision party. Let's continue our brief review of the distress and schism created by several loose cannons who could not stand grace but loved legalism.
3. True circumcision comes from a renewing of the mind and not by the cutting away of useless flesh.
 - 3.1 Circumcision for the Jewish legalist had become one of many rituals distorted by the Scribes. Acts 15:1-2
 - 3.2 Some made circumcision a requisite for salvation and for others it became a requisite for spirituality.
 - 3.3 They failed to remember it was only a sign to teach and to commemorate Abraham's maturity. Jer 6:10
4. In the early days of the Church Age circumcision became very divisive; 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.

5. 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 abolished the Law and its ordinances.

Eph 2:10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

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,

6. 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:

7. 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 doing what God says is what counts.

8. Notice how strongly 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.

8.1 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.

9. 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;

10. Circumcision is used analogously for:

10.1 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 stiffnecked.

10.2 Circumcision is used 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.

10.3 Circumcision of the heart, not phallus, is the sign of 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.

11. Now let's return to Gen 17:22-24.

Gen 17:22 And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.

Gen 17:23 And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him.

Gen 17:24 And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

Gen 17:25 And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

Gen 17:26 In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son.

Gen 17:27 And all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him.

12. Notice Abraham circumcised Ishmael and the various gentiles (called strangers) residing with him.

13. Let's review the Doctrine of Ishmael before moving to chapter eighteen.

Doctrine of Ishmael

1. Ishmael was the firstborn son of Abraham by Hagar, an Egyptian maid of his wife Sarah. Abraham was 86 at the time and had lived in Canaan for 11 years.

2. Sarah, the barren wife, in keeping with customs of her times as seen in the Babylonian law code of Hammurabi, gave her slave Hagar to Abraham to produce an heir for the family.

3. When Abraham was 99 God renewed His covenant with him and enjoined circumcision of Ishmael as a sign of his membership in the covenant community.

4. God also announced that He would fulfill the divine promise through his wife Sarah, although Abraham looked on Ishmael with deep affection and prayed that he might be the promised heir (Gen 17:18).

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.

5. When Ishmael was circumcised, Abraham and all his household-those born to the men and women who had grown up in his employ and newcomers to the household through purchase from foreigners-were also circumcised.

5.1 Ishmael was then 13 years old. Many Arab tribes still circumcise their youths at the age of 13.

6. Fourteen years after the birth of Ishmael, Isaac was born to Sarah and Abraham. The jealousy that had long separated Sarah from Hagar came to a breaking point at the time of the weaning of Isaac.

7. Sarah insisted, contrary to the customs of the times as evidenced by Abraham's displeasure (Gen 21:11), that Hagar and Ishmael leave to live in the wilderness of Beersheba, and later in the wilderness of Paran.

End Lesson